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George Will

A Recollected Graduation Toast

Michael Ledeen, Philip Lawler

Janet Cooke's Graduation Boast

THE AMERICAN SPECTATOR®

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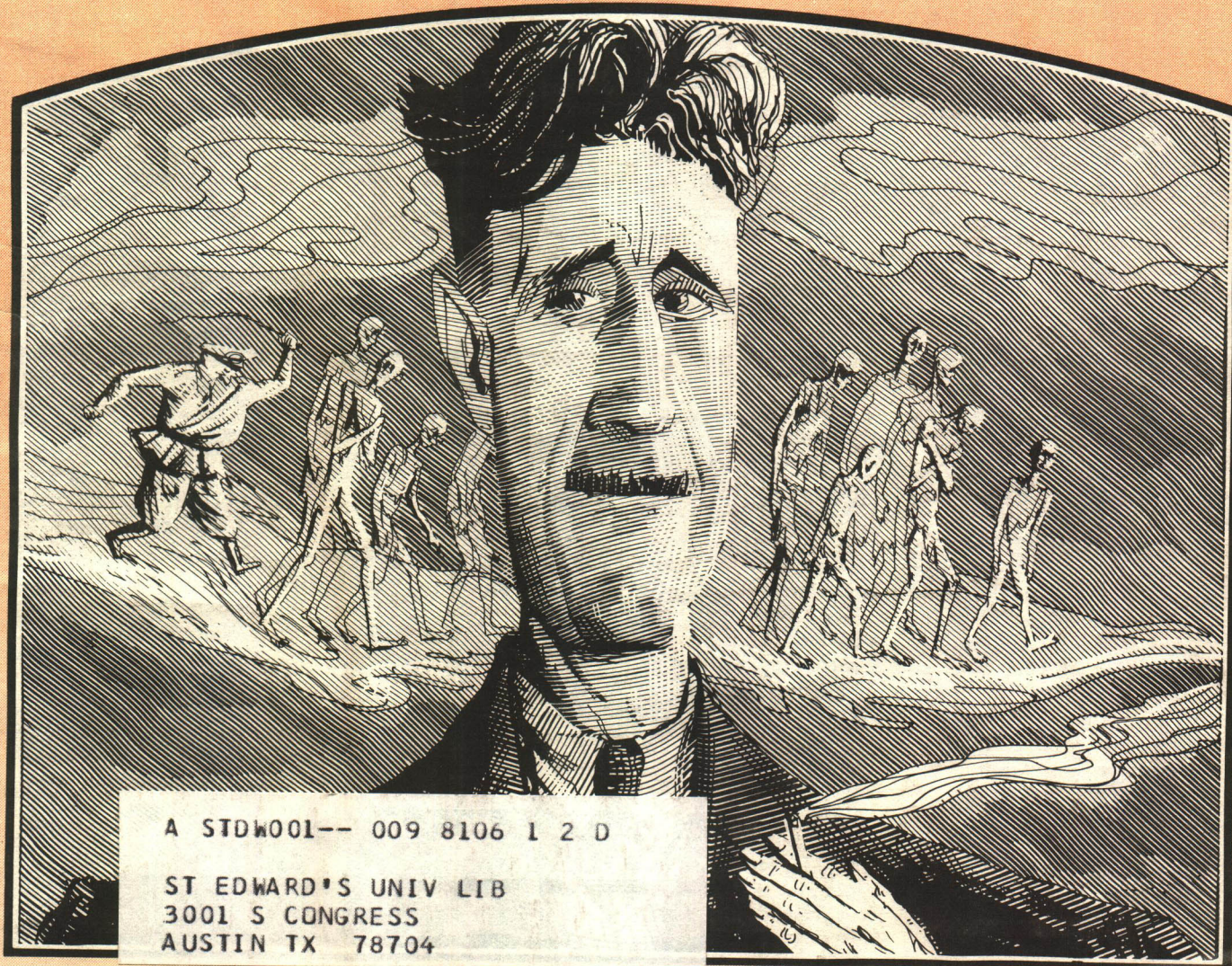
James Nuechterlein: Ill Liberalism

Andy Stark: Relative Simplicity

Herb Greer: Invidious England

Orwellian Revisionism

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A MONTHLY REVIEW
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THE CONTINUING CRISIS



• April 2 to May 8 and the debonaire Ron leaps from triumph to triumph. Meanwhile his long-time moral and intellectual superiors on the Left continue to thrash and to gurgle. It is a rather surprising scene. On April 28, the ninety-ninth day of his administration and the thirtieth day since the assassination attempt, President Reagan strode into the Capitol and before a joint session of Congress asserted that it was "time we tried something new." What he had in mind was his 1982 budget calling for an end to the government's proclivity to gorge itself and to gouge its subjects. It is the most dramatic break with federal policy since the New Deal, and when the President was done crooning to the assembled Solons and Numas he had personally given it a head of steam that continued to build through the month until Republicans and conservative Democrats set it sailing through both Houses.

• It was a grand month, but it left the Falstaff of the House of Representatives, the Hon. Tip O'Neill, in a rumpled heap, and very dyspeptic at that. Grumbling about poverty and travail, two matters that he has not personally experienced since arriving at the trough years ago, the corpulent old bamboozler issued tired warnings against the President's budget and urged instead that we continue the liberal flimflam of taking money out of our right pockets, putting it into our left pockets, and telling ourselves that we have created more for everyone. Somehow his grumbles were not picked up. Somehow even many of his Democrats grew impatient. Finally the honorable gentleman threw in the towel, and the roar that had been American political liberalism fell into a funk.

• In Los Angeles, Miss Marilyn Barnett announced that she gave up a prodigious career in hairdressing back in 1972 to become the lesbian lover and "cleaning person" to Mrs. Billie Jean King. The unusual arrangement lasted for seven years, and now Miss Barnett is suffering her good name to the high and perilous seas of notoriety so that she may win the right of palimony not only for heterosexuals but also for the sexually offbeat. She desires half of Mrs. King's fat six-figure yearly income, earned during their years of bliss, and part ownership in Mrs. King's Malibu beach house—assuming a proper judge can be ferreted out. In Saginaw, Michigan, a seventy-four-year-old woman, Miss Ottilie Asman, showed that sisterhood is indeed powerful when she stomped her eighty-three-year-old brother Ernest to death during a rhubarb over a bowl of not very interesting soup. And in Chicago, Illinois, a Circuit Court jury awarded \$6.5 million in damages to a Highland Park, Illinois woman who entered the hospital in 1975 for a simple nose job and left a quadriplegic, owing to brain damage suffered during the operation. According to the plaintiff's lawyer: "She has a beautiful nose, and that's about the only beautiful thing left."

• On April 5, Signore Mario Morreti, the notorious military leader of Italy's Red Bri-

gades, was arrested by the Carabinieri in Milan. Two days later Mr. Abbie Hoffman, the American moralist, was sentenced to three years in prison for selling \$36,000 worth of cocaine to an undercover agent in 1973; and in Berne, Indiana, Mr. Christoph Rediger drowned in one of Berne's famed manure pits. The Soviet military was given still more to worry about when China's official Xinhua news agency reported that authorities in central China's Hubei Province have unveiled a "wonder toddler," a three-year-old boy weighing 89 pounds who consumes two pounds of food per day. And Arab apprehensions over the extent of Zionist control of American institutions received awesome substantiation when it was revealed that Mr. Little Sun Bordeaux is Jewish. Mr. Little Sun is a direct descendant of Chief Crazy Horse, and upon his nineteenth birthday he will become chief of the Sioux Indians. Moreover, El Al Airlines is sending Mr. Little Sun on a free trip to Israel where he will be fed bagels and will powwow with bearded rabbis.

• In England, where fanatical teetotalers heated up by the triumphs of feminists and other forces inimical to civilized life are making their most violent assault against spirituous beverages in years, Dr. Anthony Morris has heaved up a new bugaboo. According to him, males who indulge beyond the sissy limits he establishes will develop breasts, curved hips, and diminished sex drives. Well, what's wrong with that? Some of us like breasts and curved hips, Dr. Morris! The horror of rape was driven home to millions of heretofore obtuse Americans when a Washington, D.C. Superior Court judge was forced to declare a mistrial in a rape case. Two female jurors blew up under the stress of the testimony and took to drink. The jurors, Mrs. Juanita Ross and Mrs. Virginia Starks, soundly sozzled themselves with 7-Up and whiskey which they had secreted in their purses, and brought final jury deliberations to such a pother that the judge had to end the debauch. The illustrious Pulitzer Prize Committee rescued the good name of American journalism by withdrawing its Prize from the dastardly Miss Janet Cooke, whose fraudulent story proved too untenable even for the Pulitzer Committee. Instead the Committee handed it over to Miss Teresa Carpenter of the venerable *Village Voice*. Miss Carpenter was honored for three colossal stories, one of which accused Mr. Allard Lowenstein, deceased, of homosexuality and preying on associates in the civil rights movement, one of whom murdered Lowenstein. This splendid piece of service to the community quotes only the most unimpeachable unidentified sources, which suggests yet another fine award that the Pulitzer Prize Committee might give. How about a Pulitzer for the most gossipy unidentified source?

• The name of Perry Jay Goldberg will be long remembered in the Chicago Cubs' front office. Just days before the Cubs' season opener Mr. Goldberg died leaving but one request, to wit: that his cremated remains be spread over

Wrigley Field, possibly as turf builder. Unfortunately, the Cubs snubbed Mr. Goldberg's request and duly lost twelve of their first thirteen games. On May 3, twenty to twenty-five thousand of those indomitable peace marchers who eventually were so instrumental in bringing peace to Vietnam marched in Washington to protest budget cuts, nuclear energy, the heterosexual tyranny, American policy toward El Salvador, and the growing militarization of American life. Evidence of the latter was amply provided when two "white haired" matrons were detained at California's Mather Air Force Base, after they eluded security forces and rolled their orange sedan up to one of four B-52s parked on the "alert line" of the 320th Bomb Wing of the Strategic Air Command. And from Cuba comes word that the high-spirited Cuban Communist party has held its first annual Humor and Militant Drawing Contest in the recently renamed city of San Antonio de Humor. The merry saturnalia featured the work of 260 "clean" humorists, political cartoonists, and militant artists seeking "apart from laughter and smiles, to call men to the fight, to solidarity or to reflection."

• Mr. Craig Clairborne, resident gourmet for the *New York Times*, has had his famous \$4,000 meal surpassed by two heretofore little celebrated gourmets, Mr. Russell O. Christie and Mr. Jeffrey A. Brown of Las Vegas, who had a \$32,000 repast on four Colorado River squawfish valued at \$8,000 apiece. Unfortunately, the fellows had stolen the fish from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service hatchery, and if Mr. Clairborne is going to experience their meal he will have to act fast. The fish were part of a \$1 million attempt to save squawfish from extinction, and as the fellows stole mostly females, the squawfish is somewhat in the same position as Mr. Lee Iacocca. The Boy Scouts of America are being sued by Mr. Timothy Curran, a UCLA homosexual protesting that California's Mount Diablo Council of the Boy Scouts will not allow him to disport with the boys.

• Moscow's "singing burglar" has been caught singing in a Moscow flat where his escape during a nocturnal expedition was delayed by the sight of his victim's piano. He was in the middle of a capitalist aria when nabbed. In Rockville, Maryland, high-school teacher Cyril Lang has been brought to justice by the Montgomery County Board of Education for reading the lubricious Aristotle and—still worse—Machiavelli to his tenth-grade English class. On a happier note, in California the Berkeley Board of Education will require high-school students to take instruction in draft dodging; and finally, from Sacramento, California, comes word that, though California is reluctant to force immigrants to adopt English, it has no qualms about forcing them to adopt our dietary habits. In a bill passed by the California Senate, Southeast Asian immigrants are urged to respect the "cultural difference" of their new home and refrain from eating their pets. The Republic wobbles on, polylingual but with a single humane diet. —RET

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EDITORIAL



DOWN AND OUT IN LIBERAL FASHION

by R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr.

Orwell. Orwellian. The words hold an august position in our political vocabulary. They connote government dependent on fear, the use of terror, the pervasiveness of banality, drear, and a thoroughly corrupted language. Taking away the fear and terror, it is the government envisaged by the New Age liberals with their benevolent coercions, their enervating levellings, their endless tampering with the meaning of plain English.

George Orwell was the farsighted English novelist, essayist, and critic whose name is now uttered with a hush of reverence in America and England. As 1984 approaches, I predict the reverence will increase as will the exploitation of his name.

Orwell was an independent-minded leftist who in such wonderful books as *Homage to Catalonia*, *Animal Farm*, and 1984 blew the whistle on the totalitarian nature of Communism and its ghastly brutality toward all forms of opposition no matter how decent or restrained. In the 1930s, when the friends of Lillian Hellman here and the friends of journalist Claud Cockburn in England were slobbering all over Uncle Joe Stalin and the Communists of the Spanish Civil War, Orwell parted company, identifying them as the cranks, the frauds, and the knaves that they were and shall ever remain.

But Orwell was not the only writer to follow an independent course in the 1930s and 1940s. Nor did the example of the independent-minded anti-Communist end with his death in 1950. Why is it that he is so venerated today? Just a couple of weeks ago the reviewer of an Orwell biography noted that its author, Bernard Crick,

ranks Orwell as one of England's three greatest political writers along with Swift and Hobbes. The reviewer, laboring in the *New York Times Book Review*, neither snickered nor shuddered. To the contrary, he lit candles and saluted this pish-posh.

Orwell is indeed a stupendous political writer, and he did incur torrents of cruel oburgation from the entrenched Left for his outspoken denunciation of totalitarians and their appeasers. Yet so did others, for

instance Arthur Koestler, who writes with greater breadth, and Malcolm Muggeridge, who writes as well as Orwell, and with more humor. Why all the organ music from the liberals? Does an anti-Communist have to be dead to rouse their respect? My suspicion is that, wracked by guilt over their failure to oppose contemporary left-wing aggression, they praise Orwell in hopes of tranquilizing their twinges of guilt while bolstering their now flyblown anti-Communist credentials.

Hence they solemnly heave red roses on the grave of the great Orwell. They memorialize his bravery. They affirm that Stalinism was indeed very nasty. They even arrive at our doors with quotations from Chairman Orwell: his reference to "smelly orthodoxies," to "Big Brother," and on and on. They wrap themselves in Orwell's shroud.

His timely death made him all the more serviceable to his left-wing extollers. Unlike Koestler and Muggeridge, he never had the opportunity to discredit himself in their eyes by actually taking an active role in the Cold War. Moreover, there was always a seedy fecklessness about him that makes him especially appealing to the left-wing academics who run their reform movements on leisurely schedules from the local university clubs.

Orwell wrote and wrote, but he always stood aloof politically. Today the liberal pedant can celebrate him and still feel no compunction about failing to oppose the Communists' more recent acts of aggression—for instance the continuing Communist atrocities in Southeast Asia where poison gas, concentration camps, and slavery remain daily instruments of progressive government, or in Eastern Europe, or in the newly colonized African satellites, and now in Central America. In praising Orwell all these modern-day examples of Communist barbarism can be neglected and prodigious feats of bogus scholarship can be heaved up to demonstrate how Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, Afghanistan, and now El Salvador are the normal political developments of an ever-improving world.

I do admire Orwell. I have derived great pleasure and instruction from his writing. His prose is the work of a god accompanied by angels. But I balk at the liberals' refusal to give



Adapted from RET's weekly column syndicated by King Features.

Orwell's old allies their due. Why not raise a toast to Koestler? Surely they can forgive him for his commitment to the party of liberty and his never having, so far as I can

recall, expressed a cheap emotion. And what about Muggeridge? He blew the whistle on the Soviet paradise even before Orwell. True, he has gone on to become one of

Yahweh's most ardent boomers, and I understand the distress and even the panic his laughter causes these good liberals. But if they would add one or two more anti-Communists to

their museum it would make the place more impressive, and it would put the liberals under no greater obligation to oppose Communism today. □

C A P I T O L I D E A S



RENT ASUNDER

by Tom Bethell

I've reluctantly come to the conclusion that the ability to understand the price mechanism, the most important idea in economics, is beyond the power of most college-educated mortals. Certainly the author J.K. Galbraith never quite grasped it. The basic point—terribly difficult as you will see!—is that a price represents the point at which buyer and seller are in agreement. Prices thus express voluntary transactions between consenting adults.

Prices shift up and down over time, and in so doing they equalize supply and demand. If politicians do not allow prices to move up then demand will exceed supply and the politicians will be rewarded with shortages, queues, urgent demands for new bureaucracies, the political allocation of scarcity, and, in the end, additional police to enforce the ban on price increases: a heavy price to pay for a ban on voluntary transactions.

Price controls transform a free market into a black market, and turn customers into potential criminals. Military economics is the appropriate name for this form of warfare by governments against citizens, and it has had an abiding appeal for Mr. Galbraith and other socialists both inside and outside the Soviet Union (where it has been practiced, without conspicuous success, for over 60 years).

Tom Bethell is *The American Spectator's* Washington editor.

These thoughts have been prompted by the recent imposition of rent controls in Los Angeles. Within the last two years Los Angeles (county and city), Beverly Hills, and Santa Monica have all enacted rent controls, the last in exceptionally severe form. As a result, I have concluded

after a brief investigation, there are no privately financed apartments under construction in Los Angeles today. The Los Angeles outcome ten or twenty years hence can be observed at first hand in New York today.

Supporters of rent control say that

apartment construction in Los Angeles was already declining before the various rent-control initiatives were put on the ballot in the late 1970s. True. But why the decline? Here we come to the crux of the issue. Earlier in the decade the various city governments of Southern California adopted no-growth laws in the guise of protecting the environment. (In fact, as we shall see, these laws were intended primarily to protect those who had already arrived against newcomers.)

Here's a real-life example, illustrating what happened. Charles Isham, 37 years old, owns two 12-unit apartment buildings, one in Santa Monica and one in L.A. "The one in Santa Monica was built in 1965," Isham told me. "If it burned to the ground today I would have to replace it with a 6-unit building, because of zoning changes requiring lower density construction. You used to be able to build on about 80 percent of the lot. Today you can only build on 50 percent of the lot." Similar density changes and requirements that parking be underground, with two to three parking spaces per rental unit, were enacted in Los Angeles.

What was the result of these zoning changes? Obviously, construction costs per unit rose rapidly—so much so that developers found they would have to charge (say) \$1500 per apartment per month to recover their costs and make a profit in excess of what they could make by leaving their capital in a money market. The upshot was that only luxury apartments were built. Or



better yet, condominiums. People will more willingly buy condos because they do so with borrowed money, the repayment value of which steadily erodes with inflation, and they get a tax break into the bargain.

So condo construction replaced apartment construction. Meanwhile, ever-increasing numbers of apartment seekers began bidding up the price of the constant (or dwindling) supply of apartments. Rents thus began to rise rapidly, and that is why the rent-control initiatives were put on the ballot, or, in some cases, were simply voted in by the city council. That is, city governments ruled that renters who were willing to pay the asking price must not pay so much. (Price controls are always best described from the point of view of the buyer, just as minimum-wage laws are best described as injunctions against sellers: preventing people from selling their labor for *less* than a certain amount.)

With the rent-control laws on the books, apartment construction halted completely. Someone in the L.A. Department of Building and Safety told me that he did not know of any new apartments being built in the city, although it is possible that a few luxury units are going up. (Again, they would more likely be condos if they were intended for the well-off. The permit procedure in City Hall makes it almost impossible for officials themselves to know whether the new units are apartments or condos.)

Similar zoning changes have affected the price of single family homes. Until the early to mid 1970s, you could build a new house on 5000 square feet of land. "Today," the man at Building and Safety told me, "City Planning will hardly ever grant permits to build unless the lot is 7500 or even 10,000 square feet." Land costs account for one-third of the final price of the house. Is it surprising, then, that the price of the average new house in Los Angeles is about one-third higher than in the rest of the country?

The interesting thing about all this is that, although the arguments are elementary from an economic point of view, and the facts are not contested by anyone I have spoken to, there is a peculiar silence surrounding the subject. You never read anything about the economic repercussions of zoning changes in the newspapers.

I have frequently discussed these matters with journalists in recent weeks. A typical conversation might go like this:

"If you require people to build houses or apartments on larger lots," I might say, "then they are bound to be more expensive."

The journalist will take a puff or two from his cigar and give me a sidelong look. "You know what the real explanation is?" he will reply. "It's greed."

This is no good as an explanation, of course, because if greed does

indeed animate entrepreneurial activity, then surely it always has. Why did its ill-effects show up in California in the mid-seventies? A common variant on the greed theme is to say that rent control only surfaced after Proposition 13 passed. Thereupon landlords refused to lower their rents, as they had promised to do. Tenants, angered by thoughts of this unshared windfall, retaliated with rent-control initiatives.

This explanation won't do either, however. Its obvious appeal is that it puts the blame squarely on the shoulders of landlords. But a chronological survey shows that some of the rent-control initiatives were already underway—petitions being circulated, and so on—before Proposition 13 passed. And of course logic itself belies the argument. If landlordism was so profitable, why were no new apartments being built?

Local journalists, I notice, will at this point sometimes adopt the following fall-back position. With a look of moral superiority they will say: "You're just expressing the point of view of the business interests!"

In newspaper articles about rent control, it is quite uncontroversial and routine for reporters to relegate the points I have made to a buried, penultimate paragraph—no one can then say that "the business point of view" has been excluded—while the overall thrust of the story is to represent rent control as a victory forged by a coalition of government and little guys against businessmen.

The problem here is that the economic sequence of events I have outlined does not represent a "point of view" at all. It is a universal reality that would apply even to a journalist in the unlikely event that he were to try his hand at the risky business of making something and then attempting to sell it. Any journalist could understand this if someone came to him and said: "I will offer you one of two deals. The first nets you nothing. The second nets you ten thousand dollars. Which would you prefer?"

To say that choosing the latter represents "the business point of view" is absurd. It is everyone's point of view. But it is just this kind of "choice"—i.e., no choice at all—that a businessman faces when he decides whether to build apartments or condos; a medium-priced house or an expensive one; or, as is increasingly happening, a building in Los Angeles or one in Houston (where they don't have no-growth or rent control laws).

Many reporters, alas, never quite grasp this. They see themselves as morally superior to businessmen because most reporters are paid less than their level of education demands. That is, they could earn more if they were willing to "sell out." Their refusal to do so leads to the perception that they lead disinterested lives, untainted by self-interest, in sharp contrast to businessmen. And that is why so many journalists—an overwhelming majority—tend to regard themselves not as watchdogs of government, but as watchdogs for government (against business).

Finally, many people (not just journalists) regard no-growth laws as above reproach because they were swept in on a high tide of good intentions. To criticize them retroactively because they turn out to have had bad consequences is thus seen as a retreat, a failure of nerve, a confession of past inadequacy. Obviously, however, no-growth legislation was and is a terrible idea. Its principal effect has been to make life a good deal harder for those on the bottom half of the socio-economic ladder.

And when you think about it, no-growth itself is an utterly spurious ideal, one that is based on the fantasy of stasis—the horizontal line on the graph that never exists in reality. When a body stops growing, it starts deteriorating. The new growth feeds the whole body, not just the new tissue. It is the same with cities. When they stop growing, they start dying. Los Angeles, I predict, will start "moving" in the years ahead building by building, to Houston. □





James Nuechterlein

THE POST POST-LIBERAL DEPRESSION

Liberal inertia is on the move.

The world is turned upside down: The conservatives are in, the liberals are out, and the Republican party, for the first time in anyone's memory, has to contend with the problem of overconfidence. The after-effects of last November's shockwave linger on all along the political spectrum, but they are felt with special force on the Left. Not since the 1920s—over half a century ago—have liberals experienced such uncertainty and disarray. They have lost more than an election; they have lost their confidence, their will, and their sense of direction. Nobody knows what liberalism today is or should be. Liberals know only that things are hopelessly muddled and the times badly out of joint.

The liberals' dilemma consists of both a bewildered indecision as to where they ought to go from here and an unsettling conflict between the pressures of political reality and the biddings of ideological instinct. The *New Republic*, which has served for so long as the voice of mainstream liberalism, summarized the former problem when it remarked recently that while most liberals agree that liberalism must be redefined for the 1980s, "the problem . . . is that no one knows what the new agenda ought to be." It is difficult to rally troops to a cause the substance of which remains to be determined.

The second and more painful horn of the liberal dilemma—the tension between what it makes political sense to do and what liberals actually want to do—found dramatic expression at the Democratic convention last August. In the first days of the convention, a common theme dominated the observations of outsiders and party members alike. Whatever their other differences, all commentators agreed—the point became tiresome in repetition—that the party must move beyond the old

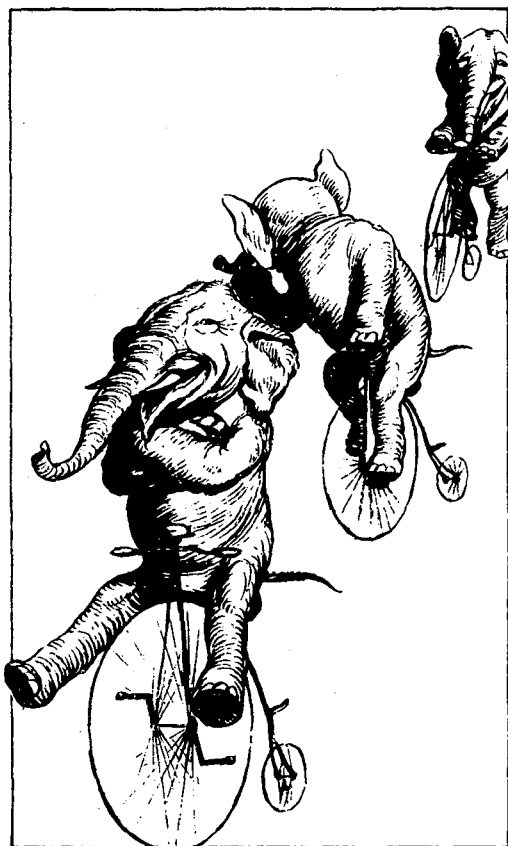
programs and the old rhetoric. The New Deal, it was said, was finally history, and Democrats could no longer expect to live off its political capital. America in 1980 was not the America of the 1930s, and liberals would have to adjust their ideas and their policies accordingly.

And yet, despite this solemn consensus, the convention experienced its only moment of genuine enthusiasm in response to a speech by Ted Kennedy that conjured up an America consisting entirely, at least in metaphor, of widows and orphans and oppressed minorities. It might well still have been 1937, with Franklin Roosevelt reciting his litany of compassion for one-third of a nation enduring in abject misery. And in that moment of self-revelation, the Democrats of 1980 were the Bourbons, forgetting nothing and learning nothing. Many liberals have never quite

got over the Great Depression, and they find it difficult to see America or to formulate social policy in terms other than those appropriate to that now-distant time. At one level they understand that things have changed and that they must change with them, but at another, deeper level they sense that to change would be to forsake the only religion some of them have ever known.

What all these uncertainties and contradictions add up to is a kind of political schizophrenia. Again, the *New Republic* exemplifies the current liberal condition. It seems hopelessly torn between neo-conservative and neo-populist instincts. On any given issue, its individual articles and columns turn on each other in fratricidal warfare. A hardline editorial on the need for a new realism in foreign relations runs up against a column by Ronald Steel mouthing all the Fulbright/McGovern pieties about the arrogance of power and the essential fecklessness, if not corruption, of American foreign policy. Pat Moynihan writes on the need for liberals to reassess their assumptions, while a few pages over he and those like him receive the most withering, and often viciously personal, assaults. Parts of the *New Republic* read like the *Nation* or the *New York Review of Books* in their most febrile moments, while others read like rewrites from *Commentary*. The editors of the journal have evidently decided to open their columns to the widest variety of liberal opinion, and in so doing they have revealed the chaotic jumble to which liberalism is currently reduced. Liberalism has lost its vital center; indeed, it has no center at all. (It is only fair to note that today's *New Republic*, whatever its vagaries, is well edited and almost never bores. It stimulates even though, or perhaps precisely because, it does not know where it is going.)

What has happened? How is it that the



James Nuechterlein, a historian, has contributed to *Commentary*, *Review of Politics*, and many other journals.

liberals, who have governed the nation and defined its political/cultural assumptions for most of the last 50 years, have fallen on such lean times? It must be understood, in the first place, that their difficulties have not arisen overnight. Liberals have been on the defensive ever since the mid-late sixties, when the Great Society began to come unglued at the same time that Vietnam was turning into a quagmire. Without Richard Nixon's gift to them of Watergate, the Democratic liberals would have lost their ascendancy well before 1980. The election of 1972 should have been the critical political moment that Watergate, as it turned out, postponed for eight years. In the interim the liberals remained uneasily dominant, but only, as Robert Bartley has noted, "through sheer inertia." The nation drifted through most of the seventies in a kind of political vacuum, of which Jimmy Carter's presidency was the perfect expression.

Liberalism had ceased to work long before it ceased to reign. Whether in domestic affairs, where it led the economy into inflation in the midst of recession, in foreign policy, where it first overextended the nation's efforts and then retreated into a peevish and guilt-ridden isolation, or in cultural matters, where its tolerant pluralism descended, willy-nilly, into defense of moral decadence, the moderate Left found

itself floundering amidst exhausted ideas, discredited policies, and worn-out men. Yet in much the same way that conservatives in the 1930s refused to adjust to new political and economic conditions, liberals in the seventies seemed unwilling or unable to adapt to altered circumstances. Their obstinacy has already cost them, though it is too early to determine whether they will pay in the end as drastic a political price as did the Hoover conservatives.

It is the failure of liberalism in economic affairs that matters most politically. Americans remain more likely to vote their pocketbooks than their concern for the nation's role in the world or their cultural discontents. In the collapse of Keynesianism, liberals have lost the essential core of their program of political economy. Keynes's theory was the bridge by which liberals passed over from New Deal poverty to postwar prosperity. Keynes provided the rationale for government policy that was at once activist and yet limited in scope. Private ownership and public purpose could be combined in a scheme that seemed to steer perfectly between the perceived evils of unregulated capitalism and state socialism. Through the management of demand, the theory went, liberals could ensure growth and prosperity, moderate the waves in the

business cycle, and in general fine-tune an economic system capitalist in its basic structure but with plenty of room for the provision by government of public goods and services to which liberals were politically and emotionally committed. Yet in recent years, Keynesian policy has failed to accomplish any of the things promised in its name. Our economic engine, far from fine-tuned, misfires and sputters when it does not overheat, and it sometimes threatens to break down altogether.

It seems only yesterday that Richard Nixon confided to a reporter that he too, like everyone else, was now a Keynesian; today one wonders where a Keynesian might be found. Even those liberal economists who heap scorn on proponents of the Laffer Curve seem ready to concede that our current need is to focus on supply-side economics rather than on the Keynesian emphasis on aggregate demand. Bereft of their Keynesian crutch, most liberals simply do not know where to turn in search of an economic policy.

In foreign affairs, the liberal record, perhaps less costly in political terms, has been even more disastrous. Though their intentions were surely otherwise, most liberals have in the years since Vietnam sounded more often than not like anti-American cranks. They have regularly suspected the worst about their own nation's intentions while believing the best about those of its enemies. They have appeared willing to sacrifice the national interest to vaporous abstractions, pursuing phantoms of peace, disarmament, and human rights in the persistent illusion that good intentions, appeals to reason, and conciliatory gestures constitute a workable foreign policy. From Vietnam to Iran, from Latin America to the Middle East, with friend and foe alike, the result has been a record that has favored neither the cause of peace nor the security of the nation.

Then there are the social issues. It may well be that liberalism's finest legacy to the nation has been its defense, often in desperate times, of civil rights and civil liberties. Yet here too, liberals have in recent years lost touch with their society and with the best of their own tradition. The heroic postwar struggle for civil rights for blacks has descended into insistence on policies like busing, which wastes large amounts of money and does not work anyway, or imposition of quotas, which denies the fundamental American premise of equal opportunity without regard for circumstances of ancestry, class, or religion. Elsewhere, liberals have drifted into support of ever more radical and exotic versions of gay rights and women's lib, thus allowing conservatives to monopolize the political benefits accruing from public concern over erosion of traditional values in the workplace, the home, and the church.

In civil liberties, the basic struggle for First Amendment political rights having



been won, liberals have been diverted to such marginal areas as the defense of pornography, not in the sense of protecting serious literature against the philistines, but of shielding hard-core pornographers from communities concerned, with good reason, over moral decay. Tolerance, which liberals used to understand as an instrumental value, has been elevated into an absolute good. Today's Times Square stands as a monument to the degradation of the defense of free speech.

The failure of liberal policy prescriptions has begun to awaken Americans to some fundamental vulnerabilities of liberal philosophy. We see more clearly today than we have before that much of liberalism rests on questionable premises: that human nature, if not wholly benign, is at least infinitely malleable, that social relations and social structures are readily responsive to applications of rationality and good will, that society can and should change its values as rapidly as it adjusts its technological apparatus, that distinctions between people are essentially environmental in origin. None of these assumptions holds up well under close scrutiny, but so long as liberalism seemed to work, especially in the economic realm, no one paid much attention. In a nation sensibly pragmatic in its political calculations, liberals were judged on the results of their policies rather than on the assumptions of their social philosophy.

In a more particular sense, the problem for liberals is that they have been coasting for some time on the momentum provided by earlier sources of liberal inspiration. Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. once remarked that his generation of liberals found their political bearings in encounter with three fundamental forces: Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal, Joseph Stalin's Soviet Union, and Reinhold Niebuhr's Christian realism. None of these forces persists today in other than the faintest echo. The dynamics of the New Deal came out of a particular set of historical circumstances that no longer obtain. Stalinism generated during the postwar years a principled anti-Communist ideology and a policy of containment of Soviet expansion, both of which, however, are now regarded by most liberals as anachronisms unsuited to an age of détente. Niebuhr's Christian realism never really took hold among the great majority of liberals, most of whom, if they understood it, regarded it with suspicion. (And they were, from their perspective, right: Whatever Niebuhr's politics, his neo-orthodoxy was rooted in philosophical conservatism.)

The old sources of inspiration have been played out, and no new ones have emerged to take their place. The civil rights movement served the purpose for a time, but, as already noted, it has worn down in recent years, while the antiwar movement was, from the beginning, so bitter and

anti-American in temper that it could only serve as a great negation. The liberals of the New Deal and postwar generations, whatever one thinks of their specific policy prescriptions, were animated by a spirit of public purpose attractive in itself. Believing in themselves and in their country, they brought a genuine sense of vision and accomplishment to their political activities. Their successors, by contrast, have been men of little faith, stirred less by hope than by resentment. So disappointed have they seemed with their society, and so distorted and cramped have their views of it become, that they have disqualified themselves as guides for the national renewal their countrymen now desperately long for.

Liberal difficulties with policy and attitude have been accompanied by problems in defining and holding a political constituency. Modern liberalism has prided itself on being the tribune of the people; liberal Democrats have thought of their party as representing the interests of the ordinary men and women of America. Yet the old inclusive New Deal coalition has begun to break down. Liberalism today appears to be less a people's movement than what Arthur Schlesinger, referring to Eugene McCarthy's followers, called "a semi-precious rally of the illuminati."

Ronald Reagan's impressive margins among ethnics, blue-collar workers, and Roman Catholics reveal how much of the white working and middle classes the Democrats have let dwindle away. They are in genuine danger of losing any substantial base in Middle America. Out of

habit and inertia, the components of the traditional Democratic coalition stayed liberal in voting behavior long after the liberals had begun to drift away from them in outlook and program; group political memories and practices tend to be extraordinarily long-lived. But, as the Democrats are now learning, memories fade and practices, if they do not bring improvement, eventually are seen as futile.

None of this should be understood as suggesting that liberalism has already suffered irreparable damage or that it has entered a state of inevitable decline. One election, however significant, does not a political revolution make. Not all liberals have succumbed to quirky anti-Americanism, cultural trendiness, or populist resentment. The neo-conservative wing of liberalism understands that liberals can be responsive to contemporary public concerns without sacrificing their New Deal heritage. A glance at Senator Moynihan's voting record indicates that neo-conservatism need not entail rejection of the welfare state. There is no logical (although there may be an ideological) contradiction between a "progressive" economic policy on the one hand, and a traditional cultural and non-apologetic foreign policy on the other.

All the same, there is reason to expect that liberals will resist movement toward the neo-conservative center. The centrists risk being dismissed as Ripon Democrats; they are open to the "me-too" charge that eventually sunk the Rockefeller wing of the Republican party. The more fashionable and articulate circles within the liberal community regard neo-conservatism as a form of moral leprosy. Thus liberal centrists have been the recipients of the kind of intense hatred reserved for any apostate from the one true faith. The Democratic party is currently dominated by its moralist faction, and the moralists are unlikely ever to make their peace with the neo-conservatives. (It might be noted in passing that neo-conservatism has its problems on the other side of the political spectrum as well. Unhyphenated conservatives often dismiss the neos as closet liberals out to exploit the new right-wing mood of the public for their own, essentially unreconstructed, ideological purposes.)

If the prospects for an attack of political common sense seem remote, liberals might more plausibly look for hope of renewal to the failure of their enemies. Given their uncertainties and internal divisions, liberals could well find a season in opposition to be in their best interests. Unity in opposition is easier than unity in power, and should Reagan's new economic policies fail, or should he, through political maladroitness, allow himself to be captured by the ideologues of the New Right, liberals could reap great benefit simply by virtue of offering the only other game in town.



Again, though, liberals cannot count on too easy a solution to their problems, and they would be unwise to depend on having their political work done for them by their opponents or by the simple unfolding of events. President Reagan has displayed to date a deft political touch and there is no present reason to suspect that he will, out of exaggerated concern for his Right flank, forsake the political center. Nor is it necessary to his political success that his economic policies rapidly turn the nation around; it is necessary only that they not resoundingly fail.

The New Deal, after all, brought only the most gradual recovery to the economy after 1933 and yet enjoyed extraordinary political success, in part because of FDR's personal popularity and in part because of the weakness of potential political alternatives. If Reagan continues to show political shrewdness, and if the key lines on the economic graph move, however slowly, in the proper direction, the liberals could remain out in the political cold for a long time to come. Like the conservative Republicans of the 1930s, today's liberal Democrats have been badly enough damaged that their opponents can expect to enjoy a reasonably extended period of grace.

It would seem reasonable to suppose, at any rate, that liberals will not be able to recapture political power simply by muddling through or by having their enemies hand them the game by default. They will have to offer a credible alternative to a resurgent and self-confident conservatism, and that means they will have to make up their minds as to where they intend liberalism to go from here. If Keynesianism has run aground and if, for the

reasons already noted, the neo-conservative option appears unpalatable, that would seem to leave liberals nowhere to go but farther to the Left. The cunning of history is such that the presumed logic of any event bears only a random resemblance to how things actually turn out, but if we regard prophecy not necessarily as prediction but as plausible extrapolation, it can serve a useful analytical purpose, so long always as we remember how conjectural and precarious an operation we are involved in. And at the moment, the most reasonable analysis of liberal possibilities would seem to indicate a movement leftward.

It is leftward, in the end, that committed liberals truly want to go. Liberal politicians will, out of necessity, make some concessions to the current conservative mood, but liberal intellectuals will exert continuing, and in the long run probably successful, pressures from the Left on the Democratic party. Liberals think of themselves as social democrats or, in the case of men like Michael Harrington and John Kenneth Galbraith, as democratic socialists, which means that they will tolerate but can never approve of democratic capitalism, at least as it exists in its to them inadequately regulated condition in America. They want more welfare, more emphasis on economic security, more direction and control by the state of the private sector. The less competitive, more egalitarian society of which they dream cannot be achieved without considerable elements of planning and regulation.

It is this seldom explicit anti-capitalist impulse that lies behind the enthusiasm with which the Left has welcomed the

limits-to-growth ideology, and which goes a long way toward explaining the current liberal passion for environmental and wage-price controls. Liberals tend to see the end of growth less as an economic threat than as an opportunity by which a society no longer expecting the expansion of its economic pie might become more receptive than it has been in the past to schemes to divide that pie more evenly. That would mean more planning, of course, and a more activist, intrusive government in general. Planning, equality, restrained growth—these are likely to become the dominant economic themes of the American Left, especially if the Reagan program runs into trouble.

The liberals' quarrel with the present state of American society extends beyond narrowly economic matters. Since at least the 1920s, liberals have been engaged in a comprehensive critique of America as a middle-class society. They oppose its customary lack of political/moral heroism as well as its acquiescence in cultural mediocrity. Societies like our own that emphasize individual freedom not only tolerate as a price of that freedom what seems to liberals an intolerable degree of inequality, but they also remain politically, morally, and aesthetically untidy. They define morality essentially in personal rather than public terms, which offends those liberals who have made a particular egalitarian version of "social justice" their political religion and who are as ready to impose their religious values on society as are, in their different way, the zealots of the Moral Majority. Our liberal moral zealots have traditionally been restrained by their pragmatic political moderation, but it seems not unreasonable to suppose that America's shift to the Right, should it continue, will so frustrate and alienate its liberals that it will move them sharply in the opposite direction.

I hope I am wrong in that supposition. Such a development would have near-term political benefits for conservatives, but it would divide Americans in a way contrary to the society's traditions of consensus and comity. In the long run, it is better for conservatives and for the country in general that liberals not drift into radicalism. Should they do so, America would become what it has not normally been: a polarized and intensely politicized society. We should have seen enough of that in the 1960s to want forever to avoid it. In such a society, the preference for cultivation of private things and for avoidance of pernicious abstractions that conservatives rightly cherish would fall an early victim. And we are all still liberals, after all. Limited government, individual freedom, commitment to a world of pluralistic and countervailing powers—these are things that all people of political sense, however they define themselves, hold in common against the men and women of terrible earnestness who are our society's true enemies. □



George Will

MATRICULATING ON THE MARGIN OF HISTORY

Another commencement address recalled two years after the fact.

Since finishing my formal education, I have had three careers: as professor of political philosophy, on the staff of the U.S. Senate, and in public commentary. The first was in the realm of thought; the second, the realm of action; the third somewhat splits the difference. And I have come to believe that one of the tasks of our time is to rescue the realm of action from disparagement in the realm of thought.

The four dominating figures of modern thought are Darwin, Marx, Freud, and Einstein. All four have at least this in common: An explicit or implicit lesson of their writings vaguely but widely felt is that human beings are not, and cannot be, in charge of their destinies; that human volition is not as sovereign or as consequential as mankind, in its naive vanity, thinks it is. Darwin attached mankind to the primeval mud from which mankind rose; he demonstrated a continuity not only between mankind and the animal kingdom, but between mankind and lesser matter. Marx purported to discover a science of *social* evolution. Society, he said, is sentenced to a dialectic of development, governed by inexorable laws, through predictable stages to a known and final destination. The ideas by which men act are, he said, phantoms—in Marx's language, "epiphenomena," or "reflections" of material conditions. Freud pioneered exploration of mankind's inner Africa, the dark continent of the unconscious. His studies of infant sexuality opened a disturbing vista: There seemed to seethe within human beings awful autonomous forces. Finally, Einstein called into question the most basic assumptions about the most elemental categories by which we organize experience—categories like matter and time. It is, after all, odd to think that the chairs one sits on are mostly space and electricity—and odder still to think that one who is sitting is mostly space and electricity.

One unintended result of the influence of

these four men is a kind of vague historical and social pessimism. As their thoughts have been vulgarized and have seeped into the mind of society, the net effect has been to diminish mankind's sense of self-mastery; to suggest that mankind is a cork bobbing on uncontrollable currents; that individuals are plastic playthings of vast, impersonal forces. The social fallout from much of the modern intellectual tradition, as foolishly taught or superficially experienced, is that history is, as Marx and James Joyce said, "a nightmare"—a nightmare because mankind cannot shape it. Yet, rightly understood, neither Darwin nor Freud nor Einstein really suggests that; they provide knowledge that enhances the ability of mankind to gain purchase on reality. Marx is another matter. Most of what little he said that is true is derivative from other, more subtle minds; most of what he originated is false. And regarding Marx the prophet, his defenders have been reduced to the sort of intellectual desperation I once heard from a defender of Trotsky. The defender said—and I quote—"Proof of Trotsky's farsightedness is that *none* of his predictions have come true—yet."



All my experience conspires to teach me that individuals can make a difference; they can make history; they can matter. In the spring of 1979, I was in Spain, with King Juan Carlos. It is clear to me that Spain's transition from authoritarianism to democracy—one of the splendid events in postwar Europe—depended not just on a king, but on *that* king. No one else could have steered the course he steered; and he could have made any one of a dozen fatal mistakes. It was not "necessary," it was not "inevitable," that Spain should take the course it has taken. Similarly, if General Lee had charged Little Round Top that first night at Gettysburg, this might be two nations today. And suppose that on July 20, 1944, when Count Von Stauffenberg tried to kill Hitler, it had not been so hot. Had it been cooler in East Prussia that day, Hitler's staff meeting would have been in a concrete bunker instead of a flimsy shack that allowed the force of the bomb to dissipate. Or suppose a Hitler aide had not absent-mindedly pushed the briefcase carrying the bomb behind the heavy wood leg of the map table over which Hitler was bending. If Hitler had died that day, the war might have ended eight months sooner. What would Eastern Europe be like today if the war had ended before the Red Army arrived there?

Every instance of the role of judgment—or of luck, accident, or other contingency—in history is, to me, exhilarating. It is exhilarating because it undermines the folly of those who are inclined to believe that what is necessarily had to be. Most exhilarating are examples of the power of ideas, and of solitary thinkers, in shaping other minds, and thus in shaping history. There was a *certain* inevitability to a reformation in Europe. But Martin Luther—that volcano—was *not* inevitable. So the particular reformation that occurred was not inevitable. Oliver Wendell Holmes had an unseemly reverence for vast, impersonal forces, but even Holmes could say, with reason, that Kant had ruled Europe more effectively from his study than Napoleon had ruled it from his throne. One need not seek examples—examples of the im-

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portance of debates about ideas—so distant in time, or so far from home. Great and consequential debates occur in our time.

This nation has passed through a debate regarding a strategic arms limitation agreement—SALT II. On one level, this debate was a technical debate about hard, concrete military systems of the sort that prevent—or decide—conflicts. At another level, the debate was about the nature of the Soviet Union; about the *real* intentions of the military class that rules that garrison state. The debate was about the correct inferences to be drawn from the unprecedented, sustained, and continuing Soviet arms buildup, a buildup that has occurred during a decade in which defense spending by the U.S. declined sharply as a percentage of federal outlays and as a percentage of GNP. The debate was about the Soviet buildup that nobody believes represents a Soviet calculation of defensive needs.

This debate may appear, to our descendants, as epoch-making. But we tend to devalue our own era. People today understand the vital importance of the debate in Britain during the 1930s, a debate about how to interpret German intentions from the evidence of German arms build-ups. But few people today see the comparable importance of today's comparable debate. (I cannot forgo noting that the SALT II debate had its particular shape because the SALT treaty had its particular shape; and *that* is because Carter won in 1976; and *that* had something to do with the fact that Carter's "lust in the heart" in *Playboy* was counteracted by Ford's "liberation of Poland" during the second television debate. I have only said that contingencies matter in history, not that history is rational.)

In order to understand the way history is made in our time, one needs to know something about how history recently has been made. Unfortunately, the very people who have the strongest and most critical opinions about things often seem to have the weakest foundation in facts. I remember when I saw the film *To Die in Madrid*, a documentary about the Spanish Civil War. I saw it on the campus of a small middle western college that is very proud of having subscribed to every progressive idea in this century. At one point the film shows a column of soldiers marching; the narrator's voice says, "And the rebels marched on Madrid." At that line, the undergraduates exploded in cheers. They had heard the word "rebels" and their reflexive response was to cheer. They were so innocent of knowledge that they did not know that the "rebels" in the Spanish Civil War were Franco's soldiers.

I am told that the movie *Hearts and Minds* recently was shown at Trinity College. The *Washington Post*, no friend of either the Vietnam war or conservative doctrines, has rightly dismissed that pro-Hanoi movie about the Vietnam war as vicious anti-American propaganda. That film is in the Julius Streicher-Joseph Goebbels tradition of social commentary. It is technically inferior to, and *not* morally superior to, *Triumph of the Will*, the Hitlerite propaganda film. *Hearts and Minds* is a product of the hatred of postwar America that seized a minority of Americans in the 1960s. According to that school of thought, America is the source of sin in the postwar world, and this was demonstrated by the Vietnam war. That war (according to this school of thought) was first seen as an "indigenous peasant revolt" by the South

Vietnamese against the South Vietnamese national government. Later, when it became too obvious to deny that this was a war of conquest waged by Hanoi, this school of thought said that there "really" was no, or should be no, South Vietnam.

But today, and especially in Europe, the debate about America, and Vietnam, and Communism in general, has taken quite another turn. The genocide of the Cambodian regime, the militarism of the Hanoi regime, and the cynicism and aggression of the Peking regime have stirred an agonizing reappraisal on the European Left. The case of Jean Lacouture is illustrative. In the 1960s, Lacouture, a prolific journalist, was one of the foremost critics of American policy in Indochina, and one of the foremost apologists for Hanoi. Recently, in a remarkable *mea culpa*, he confessed that, during the 1960s, he lied, frequently by suppressing what he knew about the real nature and intentions of the Stalinist regime in Hanoi. And he acknowledged, for himself and for the many who behaved as he did, guilty complicity in the triumph in Indochina of regimes that are much more tyrannical than the regimes they supplanted.

The reappraisal of the conventional intellectual tendency to absolve Communism and blame America as the "cause" of the Cold War has been fueled by another remarkable individual who is changing the minds, and thus the destinies, of men—I refer to Pope John Paul II. It is marvelous that, today, Rome has a Communist mayor who knows next to nothing about real Communism, and a Bishop who knows virtually everything about it.

But, above all, to one man—one miracle of individualism—goes credit for changing the European intellectual climate; to one man goes credit for making anti-Communism not only intellectually respectable—even in France—but making it appear what it truly is—the moral obligation of free societies. That man is Alexander Solzhenitsyn, whose writings have inspired a host of young French philosophers. And if you doubt the power of Solzhenitsyn, consider this fact: In 1978, at Harvard, he did the impossible: He gave a commencement address that was remembered a year later.

The influence of Solzhenitsyn illustrates my thesis, which is this: The more one knows about the making of history, the less one will believe any of the many historicisms that are merchandised in our time—those theories that depict too narrowly the scope for decisive intervention by individuals in history. Individuals generally influence history only at the margins of events, but margins matter. They matter because a small turn in the rudder of a ship early in a long voyage means a huge change in the destination. And, given that society never reaches its destination, it always is early in its voyage. □



Andy Stark

THE VIRTUES OF COMPLEXITY

Hedgehogs ponder an infinite world with their finite minds,
while foxes dabble in a finite world with their infinite minds.

Many years ago, Sir Isaiah Berlin published *The Hedgehog and the Fox*, a treatise in which the greatest minds in Western culture were divided by Sir Isaiah into two groups: those who knew many little things (foxes) and those who knew one big thing (hedgehogs). Eastern culture, almost always on a completely different schedule than Western culture, in this rare instance offers us a pertinent exchange between Confucius and one of his many disciples: Confucius, a man vastly underrated in his own time, and greatly overrated in our time, once remarked to a student whose name has been lost in the sands of time: "You probably think I know many, many things. But you are wrong. I know one big thing." (translation mine)

One learns from experience that whenever Isaiah Berlin and Confucius share a perception of a certain matter, they probably are right. Nevertheless, a great grey area sits between those thinkers who know one big thing and those thinkers who know many little things, and in this great grey area there reposes a mottled band of gadflies who persistently shove the foxes and the hedgehogs off course whenever they attempt to come together, as does a force field to the negative poles of two magnets. There are, of course, those who know a few medium-sized things. More interesting are those who know many small things, but prefer only one of them—like E.M. Forster or Camus. Most interesting are those who know one big thing, but unlike Confucius, whose one big thing was a leitmotif which pervaded every small thing, their one big thing is a singular idea which must be made to apply to every small thing, no matter how procrustean the attempt. One of these thinkers is Edward Teller, the nuclear physicist who is not now, nor ever has been, a security risk.

Teller has written a book, *The Pursuit of Simplicity*,* which treats the subject of

human knowledge. The midsection of the book considers epistemological problems in scientific knowledge, in particular, those of the geometry of space and time and the conundrums of particle physics. The beginning and the end of the book contain Teller's ruminations on the nutritional qualities of scientific knowledge, that is, what sorts of things it is good for us to know, and how such knowledge should be packaged, evaluated, ingested, and regurgitated.

In discussing the nutrients of knowledge, Teller's one big thing is the pursuit

*Pepperdine University Press, \$10.95/\$6.95.



of simplicity in human knowledge, often accompanied by a Deweyan quest for certainty. Although Teller considers only science, the children of simplicity and certainty are always at war with the children of complexity and surprise; obviously, this war itself reflects a division between those who prefer to know one big thing (the children of simplicity and certainty) and those who prefer to know many small things (the children of complexity and surprise). In politics, the war is between those who fear that belief in many contending small things leads to nihilism and those who fear that belief in one big thing leads to authoritarianism. In history, the war is between a democratic history—one that the English historian J.B. Bury would have accused of thinking "too much of direct results and immediate concerns" and that the American historian Oscar Handlin would vilify for sacrificing facts to relevance—and what Bury would have called history as science—a history in which the writings of the historians are as complex and serendipitous as the subject about which they write, and in which accuracy is more crucial than usefulness. In economics, the war is between the "rational expectations theorists," who believe that the economy is simple and predictable enough for a ten-year-old child to know the rate of return on U.S. Government bonds in March, 1993, and the current economic heterodoxy, which believes that some people know more little things than other people, and that therefore cerebracracy unobtrusively elides into plutocracy unless the government monopolizes certain types of knowledge. These two cultures—the culture of simplification and consistency and the culture of complexity and inconsistency—are the *real* two cultures, for they cut across C.P. Snow's dichotomy between literature and the sciences. They are more akin to Matthew Arnold's division between those who see life steadily and those who see it whole, or Daniel Boorstin's bifurcation of *chasseurs* of historical knowledge into discoverers, who believe in the existence of simple truth ultimately to be converged

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upon by different intellectual disciplines, and explorers, who believe no such thing.

Teller, as I suggested before, knows one big thing which he cannot see in every little thing and which he therefore must apply to every little thing. And, neatly enough, his one big thing is that there is one big thing: "Science introduces consistency and simplicity into a world that without them appears confused, random, and even whimsical." The fact that Teller does not say "whimsical, random, and even confused" betrays an inability on his part to appreciate the *joie de combattre* with the absurd that is possessed by most "many little things" thinkers; the thought that the world is complex and unpredictable because it might actually be whimsical is intolerable. Beyond this, Teller suffers from the unfortunate conjunction of metaphorical onanism and malapropism which plagues many towering intellects when they attempt to apply the one big thing that has been their life's work to all the little things which constitute human life: He frequently fails to carry his metaphors to their logical climax, and therefore avoids having to face the sad fact that they are often not only wildly irrelevant, but in fact often support the very contention that he is attempting to impugn.

Having made such a charge, I feel honor-bound to substantiate it; but instead of providing the most flagrant example I shall instead spotlight the one which I think does the most damage:

About the time that the Middle Ages were expiring, the legend of Dr. Faustus gained popularity in Europe. Faustus, an alchemist, was supposed to have superhuman powers because he had sold his soul to the Devil. A great many people considered the first stirring of the Industrial Revolution to be the Devil's work. The people today who want to enlighten everyone on the evils of progress may not realize that they are intellectual descendants of a medieval movement.

Those of our contemporaries who must bear the dull pain of Dr. Teller's low amplitude tongue-lashing, that is, those whom he might accuse of having a "Faust-fixation," are usually much more effectively scorned as latter-day Luddites. For although Dr. Teller may think that he is giving these anti-growth, anti-progress plaintiffs a real what-for by comparing them to those who wailed about Dr. Faustus, there is a great difference between the metaphor of Dr. Faustus and the metaphor of Ned Ludd; those literary and non-literary figures offended by Dr. Faustus (Faustians) include most of us and are by no means as easily dismissed as are Luddites. Luddites are selfish—their *geschrei* about "progress" results from a selfish sense that progress threatens them personally, whether we are speaking of print union members who refuse to allow a newspaper to automate, or members of the "new class" who react unfavorably to a nuanced reduction in the size of government. The impulsion of Faustians is very different—it is the very selfishness of others which appalls them, in particular, the selfishness responsible for instances in which private gain knowingly comes at the price of public loss. The Luddite is superstitious and unsophisticated; he is unable or unwilling to investigate cause-and-effect relationships; instead, the simultaneous advent of progress and personal discomfiture is reason enough for him to condemn progress on grounds of guilt by association. The Faustian, on the other hand, is appalled at the superstition of others, the reckless Micawberism one sometimes finds in businessmen which impels them to stake a measure of social well-being on the shaky justification of their own whims. Lastly, the Luddite is very time-bound, he has an inability to comprehend the cunningness of history. Not so the Faustian, whose whole intellectual cast comes from his ability to

perceive that actions taken today may not have their day of reckoning for years. It is true that the anti-growth movement has its Luddites; in fact, any movement which is simple-mindedly anti-growth is Luddite. But it has its Faustians too, and although it is the former group which irks Teller, and rightly so, he lets slip a metaphor which puts the alert reader in mind of the best sort of "anti-growth" writer.

So much for style. On the question of substance, *The Pursuit of Simplicity* finds Teller coming down on the side of simplicity and certainty as requirements for Grade A knowledge, as desiderata in and of themselves, as opposed to complexity and uncertainty. (He does not say that the *world* is simple and certain, that would be the position of a true Berlinian hedgehog.) Teller thus has an ideology, and in this case as in most others, the ideology is less concerned with how the world is than with how we ought to look at it (the first question is addressed in the midsection of the book). The appropriate course of action to take in evaluating Teller's position is to elicit a second opinion from someone elaborately representative of the complexity-surprise school of thought.

In casting about for a counterpoint to Teller, I came across Jorge Luis Borges, who seems to return almost anything Teller says, blow for blow, opposing him diametrically on nearly every question. For example, whereas Teller, in contemplating the effects of complexity and surprise, two of his *bêtes noires*, avers that they are likely to inspire both dangerous hopes and debilitating fears, and ventures the bold assertion that "by its nature, the future is the only period that can really inspire fear," Borges has written that hope and fear are "in vain, for they always refer to future events." For Teller, the pursuit of simplicity and the quest for certainty in knowledge can only make sense if knowledge and experience are "cumulative." Borges, by contrast, quotes Bernard Shaw: "Do not let yourself be overcome by the horrible sum of human sufferings; such a sum does not exist. Neither poverty nor pain (nor anything else for Borges in this peculiar essay) is cumulative." Teller, in another instance of metaphorical onanism-malapropism, appropriates what he terms "complimentarity" (which was Niels Bohr's rationale for holding two contradictory ideas in the mind at the same time, like the notion that light is waves and the notion that light is particles) and applies it to morality, i.e. "no single viewpoint is necessarily more valid than another opposite one." Tradeoffs are therefore necessary. Borges, on the other hand, doesn't see it that way. His allusion is to the Mishnah, one of the two books of the Talmud, namely, the passage in which it is stated

(continued on page 37)



John Nollson

CULTIVATING THE SIMIGAWA ADMINISTRATIVE COMBINE

Federal employees have begun to organize to save their jobs in the wake of ever-rising Japanese exports of government. "It's a bureaucratic Dunkirk," said one of those affected. "Growing American imports of miniaturized, fuel-efficient, Japanese government will put all of us on the breadline, sooner or later."

OECD, IMF, GATT, UNCTAD, UNIDO, and other statistical agencies document how the Japanese have managed to corner the American market for small government. Just ten years ago, Japanese exports of government represented only eight percent of America's public sector. Today, the figure is well over forty percent. If current trends continue, American government will be driven out of business by the end of the century.

Everyone knows that the Japanese were the first to realize that American demand for government would rise, so they began to penetrate our market to secure a share for their own manufacturers. Japanese tax laws allow government to be produced in Japan far more cheaply than in any other industrialized country. Accelerated depreciation schedules enable the Japanese to modernize their government-manufacturing plants at an unheard-of rate. The result has been chaos in the world government markets as aggressive Japanese salesmen continue to operate around the globe.

Some attribute Japan's success to a brilliant marketing strategy, but real insiders know better. The truth came out during recent Senate testimony on new legislation that would provide import relief for American government and bail out four of its nearly bankrupt subsidiaries. "The American appetite for government," one expert concluded, "craves serviceable government at a reasonable price. Because our own producers failed to meet that demand, the Japanese were able to step in."

Like everything else, the trend began in California. In one California county, they decided to import an entire local government rather than purchase one from an American-owned plant in an adjacent state. Studies showed that the basic Japan-

ese local government unit—even with deluxe custom options such as a regional commission and a computerized data base—could be installed for only 63 percent of the cost of a comparable American model. No wonder we're faced with a flood of cheap imports.

Besides, the Japanese have reinforced their position with a reputation of reliable spare parts and dependable service. As one county manager put it, "If you've bought the Japanese prefectural model and anything goes wrong, the people from Simigawa Administrative Combine are on the spot in a jiffy. One day, the fan belt on our Regional Transportation Planning Agency broke down, but the folks from Simigawa had it fixed in less than two

hours. It's just as good as a Xerox."

These impressions are borne out by the charts recently published in *Consumer Reports*. The domestically manufactured product has three times the repair rate of a comparable institution made in Japan. A comparison of recall rates is even more dramatic. Japanese-made models are almost never recalled, but thousands of American-made units of government have to be recalled each year.

Analysts differ about the causes of this predicament. Some point to the rise in absenteeism on the assembly line, and others blame automation and alienation. Are we witnessing a loss of pride because so many robots have been placed on the government-making assembly line? Not likely. Many of the robots who work in the plants where government is produced take great pride in their work, but another culprit may be unrealistic environmental standards. As one expert put it, "Unreasonable federal regulations have added billions to the cost of manufacturing government. It's time to get the government off the back of government."

Some Americans are old enough to remember when this was not so. Back in the 1780s, for example, government was made by old-fashioned craftsmen who even signed their names to their work. Imports were out of the question. As everyone has read, a proposal to buy an imported turn-key Tokugawa Shogunate was shouted down without ever coming to a vote. The American product was even suitable for export; members of the European Common Market couldn't do a dime's worth of business anywhere in the Western Hemisphere.

But there's no use moaning about the good old days. Free trade in government has more than outlived its usefulness. The Japanese, in particular, aren't about to accept voluntary export quotas, nor will they soon dismantle their artfully constructed protectionist barriers. It is an outrage. Just last week, four units of American-made government destined for Hokkaido were held at the dock by officious customs inspectors who claimed that the packing crates were mislabeled.

Happily, the American manufacturer has decided to fight back. He's going to sue. □



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Herb Greer

LEFT-HAND DRIVE ON THE ROAD TO SERFDOM

Never before in Britain have so few produced so little for so much.

In January this year you could read an editorial in the *Observer* of London which began:

Britain enters 1981 an unhappily divided nation. Between supporters of the two major parties there exists, instead of normal political rivalry, a greater gap of mutual incomprehension than at any other time since 1945.

There are several things to be said about this. First, the beacon point of 1945 was not a gap between the parties but their fundamental agreement on the completion of a welfare state. The outstanding characteristic of political life in Britain since 1945 has been the lack of any genuine political rivalry between the major parties except in the most rhetorical and ritualistic sense. In office both have remained committed to the mixed economy, to the Western alliance with its nuclear deterrent, and to financing the welfare state on the assumption that it is possible to borrow yourself out of debt. Both have presided over the expansion of the middle class and consumerization of British society. Excepting the occasional ghastly hiccup like the Suez Crisis and all that embarrassment about Rhodesian sanctions, both have shared the burden of withdrawal from Britain's overseas possessions, and both have been equally ready to do business with ugly regimes of both Left and Right in each hemisphere.

Until the late 1970s the electorate concurred in a largely passive policy of government which avoided or minimized risks, trying to cover up domestic economic difficulties with a series of Micawberish short-range measures. This was not a matter of compromise but of giving way before problems, economic or political, which might be electorally awkward or dangerous. When Edward Heath tried to change the rules and fight his way out of a confrontation with the Miners' union, the electorate rejected him in 1974.

Since 1979 political life in Britain has indeed been different, but not because of

any "gap of mutual incomprehension." The fact is that the two sides of British politics understand each other very well, and it is precisely this understanding which stimulates their mutual hatred. The gap in any case is less important between the two major parties than between the two factions in the Labour Party where a totalitarian Left opposes a Social Democratic center.

The soft-centered quality of the electorate is said to date back to the post-austerity period of the fifties, when, according to the damnable slogan, they "never had it so good." But what Harold Macmillan actually said when he made his famous speech at Bedford on July 20, 1957, was: "Some of our people have never had it so good." He added, with point, "Is it too good to last?" The warning was ignored. Politicians and media seized on the slogan in the first sentence (used earlier by the Democrats in America) with almost lickerish enthusi-

asm, and the electorate did them one better. However good it might be, the bottom line was that everyone wanted it better and better, and damn the consequences, and the devil take the hindmost, unless one happened to be the hindmost—in which case the devil take everybody else. The mood was embodied in the title of a 1959 Peter Sellers film, *I'm All Right, Jack*, a bowdlerization of the British expression, "F--- you, I'm all right, Jack." It did not occur to Jack's archetypal and foul-mouthed interlocutor that he would, in effect, be f---ing himself.

The universal goal became a "higher standard of living," with all the paraphernalia of what priggish cant calls "materialism." Yet it is seldom admitted that the desire to buy a new car, have a mortgage, make those payments on the washing machine, and drink better beer or whiskey while watching color TV is not necessarily pure cupidity. Such items instill a powerful sense of progress, of moving upward and onward toward higher things. It is an illusion, of course, but our lives are built on faith in such conceits. This faith is arguably as strong as, say, the medieval peasant's belief in the sacraments. The peasant would have reacted angrily to arbitrary excommunication, just as the British electorate, with only general and fairly primitive ideas of economic process, responds with hostility and fear to a halt in "progress," and rejects any suggestion of going "backward," away from the salvation which lies at the (infinitely distant) end of a consumer-goods path. If people have followed this path for half a generation, it is extremely difficult to get them off it, even temporarily. They feel no more childish or silly in this than do worshipers kneeling on a stone step in a big pointed building while a man in exotic robes hymns incantations toward a candle-lit altar. In the British case the incantation is "higher standard of living."

Hand in hand with this powerful new soteriology goes an old Biblical impulse, well described by a nineteenth-century speaker of the House of Representatives, Thomas B. Reed. He said that when



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comparing "... the brownstone fronts of the rich merchants with the unrewarded virtue of the people on the sidewalk. ... I do not feel kindly to the people inside. But when I feel that way I know what the feeling is. It is good honest high-minded envy. When the gentlemen across the aisle have this same feeling they think it is political economy."

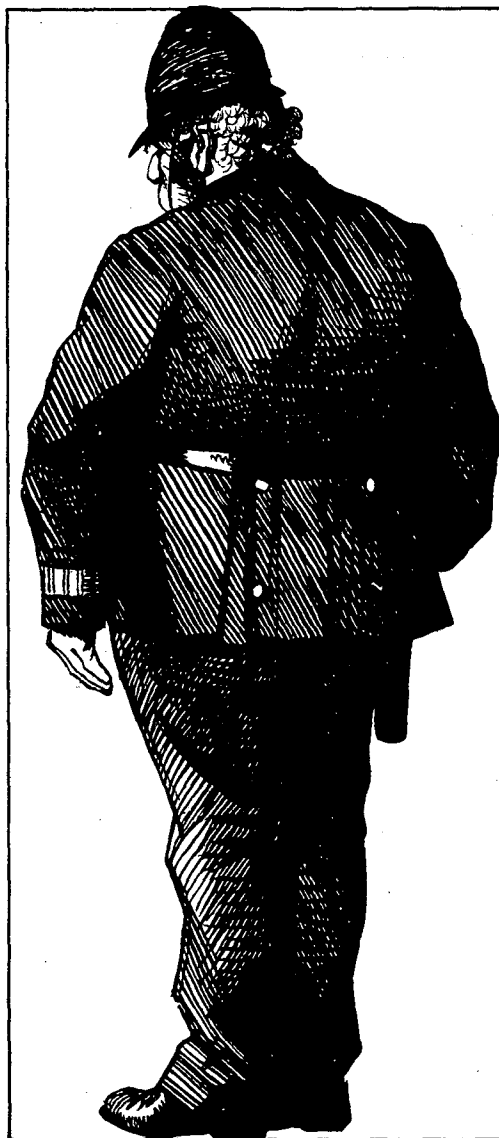
The British sense of political economy was, until the fifties, constrained by an acceptance of a relationship between wages and productivity. Then a new prophet arose in the land, one Frank Cousins, a union leader in the nationalized transport industry. This link between wages and productivity, he preached, was a chimera and a snare for the unwary and was being used as an excuse to deprive the workers of their well-deserved riches. Before the end of the decade this message led to a new method of creating wealth. Not the worker's productivity but his consent to a strike was the way to higher wages.

The resulting tendency to down tools at the slightest pretext was often portrayed both in Britain and abroad as a kind of Red Menace, in which militant left-wing activists were undermining the British economy. But the British worker is an abominable socialist, he has no flair for this dogma at all. He carries in his heart a deep respect (and demand) for private property, which is of course the truss of capitalism. It means that if you work with capital equipment which does not belong to you, then the person, corporate body, or government to which it does belong is *ipso facto* your boss. Most British workers have been thoroughly *embourgeoisés* during the past couple of decades, but few of them have lost their steel-clad conviction that the bosses are out to do them down. This residue of the British class system, and the old sense of political economy, created an amusing paradox: Unions have, since the early sixties, treated the British economy exactly as Jim Fisk and Jay Gould treated the Erie Railway; they have stubbornly and lustily watered the currency, with the co-operation of both managements and governments who gave in to their new species of wage-claim. So these Reds under the Bed have turned out to be nothing but a reincarnation of the worst of the American Capitalist Robber-Barons.

As I have said, Governments of both parties, instead of facing up to this problem, have tried to sneak round it with Micawberish sleight-of-hand. They have tinkered with taxes, continued to borrow furiously, and tried hard to sustain pay-policies of various kinds. For their part, the workers continued to reason that the government had lots of money, the bosses had lots of money (after all, that was what made them the bosses), and this money had been created by the sweat of the workers. It followed that there was no reason why the workers should not have more, and more, and more of it. Pay-

policies, when they were not ignored, invariably ended in an explosion of competing wage-claims, none related to productivity, all racing ahead faster than before the pay-policy was attempted. As everyone knows, wages duly climbed, were duly rotted by inflation, and unemployment followed after, slowly but inexorably. Industrial efficiency became a joke and markets, always taken for granted by the workers, began to fade away. No one was very happy about this, but instead of cooperating to fix it, all groups played out their usual zero-sum games, quarrelling and blaming each other. It was the fault of workers who would strike if a foreman swore at them, it was the fault of incompetent managers, it was the fault of bad salesmen or reluctant investors, it was the fault of the media who were knocking Britain. However—to paraphrase Tocqueville—even those who most vehemently attacked each other were united on one idea: The government, not the electorate, should solve all the problems; and whatever it did to solve them, no one must give up his "higher standard of living." Everyone agreed that if anyone had to skimp, it would have to be someone else.

These attitudes bore fruit in the notorious "winter of discontent" of 1978-79. Britain lay in the slovenly hands of James Callaghan's Labour government. The economic and political life of the country was



stagnating in a kind of Brownian motion, suffering a series of random collisions, mostly between government and unions. As far back as 1973 Bernard Levin had written in the *Times*:

The ... organized workers have realized that the constraints on their power that have, in the past, operated to limit the use of that power are, and probably always were, imaginary—self-imposed fetters that depended on the acceptance by the wearers of certain assumptions which they are no longer willing to make.

Levin was tardy with his observation, since the unwillingness dated from the fifties. Now, at the end of the seventies, when Callaghan's government attempted to place a five percent ceiling on wage-claims in order to fight inflation, the response was a chain reaction of strikes, notably in public services and transport. It exploded with a viciousness that swept away the most elementary social sanctions. Ambulance men declared calmly into television cameras that if people died because of this "action," that was just too bad. Picketing hospital porters "diagnosed" and capriciously barred the entry of patients, some suffering from cancer. They also stopped essential equipment such as oxygen tanks, and patients already in hospital died, though this was not and is still not admitted publicly. These dead and others were stacked up in mortuaries because gravedigger pickets would not allow them to be buried. A dazed and passive populace watched news bulletins on imports rotting in the docks, and saw companies unconnected with disputes being put out of business by "secondary pickets," while "strike committees" imposed arbitrary rule on whole communities, halting industrial and food supplies. One of these strikers, a trucker, snarled at a reporter: "Why should anybody get food if we can't buy it?" He did not mean that he and his colleagues were on starvation wages. They were really rather well paid. He meant that they wanted *more expensive* food, i.e. a "higher standard of living." Failing that, they were prepared to starve the population. And the population, it seemed, was prepared to take this lying down.

Into the situation stepped Mr. Callaghan, returning from a conference abroad. "Crisis?" he chortled. "What crisis?" He was fond of saying that such things were got up by the media. His surrealistic and more or less emetic comment on the savage behavior of those winter pickets did enrage the public. It helped to ensure the spring election of Mrs. Thatcher's Tory government. She came to office with a plan to "regenerate" the British economy with a monetarist program, to reduce inflation, cut taxes, and do something about the unions. Under the Trades Disputes Act of 1906 and Labour legislation of the 1970s, unions are virtually immune to civil law. They reacted to Mrs. Thatcher's plans like Victorian virgins who see the dirty dank paws of a rapist

slithering up their thighs. Despite their objections, there was passed a relatively mild Employment Act which modified, not very radically, some of the "traditional" immunities.

As to the rest, economic and social miracles remain in short supply on these islands. The government has had to struggle hard for two years, not only with its domestic economy but with the effects of a terrific worldwide recession. The facts are familiar: Like a vast cube of water, public spending has defied all attempts at compression. Some of this is due to continued support for nationalized industries, which appears to run against the inclinations of Industry Secretary Sir Keith Joseph; but he points out that if they were left to collapse the result would be more expensive than the present subsidy. The stated intention of Mrs. Thatcher is to sell parts of the nationalized sector back into private hands "when the market is right," while no more nationalization is planned in any industry. There is also a heavy program of overspending by local Labour-controlled councils to contend with, and of course the unemployment—figures are the highest in fifty years, one in ten of the work force—which continues to drain the public purse for dole and welfare payments.

Fear of jobs has heavily dampened wage claims in the private sector, and even some parts of the nationalized industries have been careful. British Leyland workers have accepted a small increase and workers in British Steel have actually agreed to a freeze in wages until their new American chairman can move the industry a little toward recovery. Elsewhere brute strength has continued to rule over common sense. The Mine Workers have pushed through a wage rise more than double the public sector cash-limit percentage, with the Water and Sewerage workers not far behind. The Civil Service, which includes a large part of Britain's defense establishment, has gone on strike over the government's offer of seven percent. They are engaged in active sabotage of the tax-collection system and are impairing the function of certain defense facilities, immigration posts, and customs offices. The logic of it is exquisitely insane: If the government will not give them the money they want, they will see to it that the government does not get any money to give them. They have guaranteed jobs and indexed pensions, but there is still the "higher standard of living," and the devil can still take the hindmost, or, in their case, everybody else.

The howl over the Chancellor's recent budget was immense, and it came from Mrs. Thatcher's friends as well as her opponents. But she was not at all fazed, and was in no mood to apologize. In a fierce public speech she turned on critics in her own party and raked them for demanding more public spending while

whimpering about the taxes which had to pay for it. In an amazing display of hostility, all the "serious" press attacked the Prime Minister in terms which sometimes reached hysterical proportions. Several commentators expressed a thinly veiled hope that she would be defeated at the next election, while the *Times* and the *Observer* happily contemplated the possibility that the Tories might get rid of her before then. These reports made it clear that they were inspired by comment inside the Tory party, maximizing the trouble Mrs. Thatcher was supposed to be having with former Heath supporters in the cabinet and giving unanimously downbeat and carping projections of the budget's effect on the economy. The *Sunday Times* printed an analysis (under an eight-column editorial entitled "Mrs. Thatcher's Wasteland") which did allow that the budget might work, but added that it was a terrible gamble and, anyhow, probably wouldn't succeed. The piece gave the clear impression that the writer—an Oxford don—did not want the budget to succeed. Other complaints echoed from all sides: Unemployment is wasteful, taxes are taking too much out of the economy, Britain's industrial "base" is being destroyed, not enough aid is being sent abroad, Mrs. Thatcher is too friendly to Ronald Reagan, and so on.

Television reporting has on the whole reflected the same attitudes, with correspondents showing obvious satisfaction at hostile comment on the budget, and interviews slanted heavily to create maximum political rage at the government. When the unemployed are given their say, for example, the reporter urges on his interviewee such notional miseries as the "loss of self-respect" which comes from losing a job, suggesting that the poor wretch's life is over, that he or she will never find work again.

The intensity of feeling—at least in the media—against the Iron Lady is puzzling, and may be rooted partially in a factor which was not, I believe, seriously discussed by any journalist in Britain until *Times* columnist David Wood finally broached it at the height of the budget uproar. He suggested

... that some of the Cabinet's and the Govern-



ment's public disarray also arises from the historically new experience of a woman as Prime Minister. . . . Men are not used in their own company to her style or the directness of her methods and it is easy for them to go away bearing the bruises she has inflicted and make common male cause in her absence.

It is obvious enough that they have taken pains to do so in the presence of journalists. But how much harm has this done her in the eyes of the public? Most of the electorate, when they see Mrs. Thatcher at all, do so at a distance or on a TV screen. The tough hectoring image which she deliberately projects (and, if reports are correct, is a true portrayal of her behavior in cabinet) may be helping her with the people at large. Clarence Darrow once wrote that an Englishman is never sure he is right unless the great majority is against him, and is not afraid to stand alone. There can be no doubt that Mrs. Thatcher displays these qualities in flamboyant and concentrated form. It is an extraordinary change after two decades of shifty or clumsy prime ministers. This harsh woman acts like a leader, and she is clearly stimulating even to those who grit their teeth and hate her. She is seen to govern, and to do so with a political flair and courage which most young Britons have never seen, and many older ones probably never thought to see again. The very violence of the carping and hostility in the media may in fact reinforce her authority. The ordinary voter is probably at least as suspicious of the jargonizing columnists and economists as he is of the politicians, and knows well enough that most of the current predictions of disaster are really nothing but sophisticated guesswork. There are a few indications, sometimes from surprising quarters, that public support for Mrs. Thatcher may be more widespread than many reporters would like to believe. One classic mirror of "what people think," a London taxi driver—with a Socialist family background!—expressing admiration for Mrs. Thatcher's guts, says, "I'm willing to give her time. She ought to have a chance to make it work." (The comment is all the more surprising against the background of the budget, with its stunning rise in diesel and gasoline taxes.) There are other straws in the wind. One of the most interesting panel shows on BBC television is "Question Time," in which a large studio audience is encouraged to needle public figures with awkward questions. On the day after the budget uproar, when most serious newspapers seemed to be predicting imminent revolution, the Chancellor of the Exchequer appeared on this show, opposed by a left-wing Labour MP. Audience support for the Chancellor was so strong as to be astonishing, and the Labour MP had little help for his attempt to run the government down. Since current-affairs programs on the BBC are not known for their friendly attitude either towards the Tories or towards Mrs. Thatcher in particular, this too was quite unexpected.

Economic issues figure most heavily in the concerns of the government, but they are not the only problems facing Mrs. Thatcher. She has sought (and, it seems, obtained) cooperation from Irish Prime Minister Charles Haughey over the bloody question of Ulster. Both British and Irish governments have the common goal of defeating that small group of terrorists who call themselves the Provisional IRA and who would like nothing more than a fascist-style takeover of the dear old Emerald Isle.

Nearer the center of Britain, meanwhile, a more dangerous political monster is rearing its head. For years the British were rather smug about American race problems. Now they have one of their own, of which the April Brixton riots were only the most recent manifestation. Where U.S. racists will often see their non-whites as inferior *Americans*, the cognate group in Britain does not have this disadvantage. They—and indeed most of the population—perceive non-whites as utterly foreign; not just in birth, but in religion, loyalty, and in the deeply irrational areas surrounding marriage, eating, and sanitation. This attitude persists toward non-white children who are born in this country. They too are felt to be here on sufferance, tolerated for the

time being. The idea of a dark-skinned Englishman is still very, very special.

Racism in the U.K., like most other kinds, is relatively benign until it comes under pressure. The pressures today are highly visible. Just after the war the coloured population of Britain was negligible. Today it is 3.59 percent of the population, and is expected to reach 6 percent in the 1990s. These people are concentrated in London, the West Midlands, and in the Northwest around Bradford and Manchester. The terrible economic situation, with its high unemployment, has intensified the normal chauvinism of the working class into active and often brutal hostility against black and Asian (East Indian) immigrants, which political extremists have been quick to exploit. Neo-Nazi groups like the National Front campaign for "repatriation," staging deliberately provocative demonstrations in ghetto areas (two of these were banned by the government in March). On the fascist Left Trotskyists organize counter-demonstrations. These result in battles in which the police, caught in the middle and trying to maintain order, attract the anger and abuse of Asians and blacks for "trying to protect" the neo-Nazis. This tactic has drawn a fair number of

blacks and Asians into the ranks of the far Left, which they see as their natural allies, and whose paranoid approach to politics they are very ready to share. Non-white hostility to the police is already an old story; it is being expressed now along American lines, with Watts-style riots like the one in Brixton.

And yet—the Asian and the black may say with some justification, "Just because I'm paranoid, that doesn't mean they aren't out to get me." The Joint Committee on Racial Discrimination published a report in February which cited a thousand "racist incidents" in the previous 18 months, ranging from minor harassment to murderous attacks. It asserted that Asian families were living in fear for their lives, complained of high unemployment among blacks and Asians, and noted that racist violence has spread from big cities to small communities. Another report on racial harassment in council housing estates was published in March by the Commission for Racial Equality. This confirmed the impression of the other report, with ugly stories about excrement and sometimes flaming liquids being poured through letterboxes into front hallways of flats where immigrants were living.

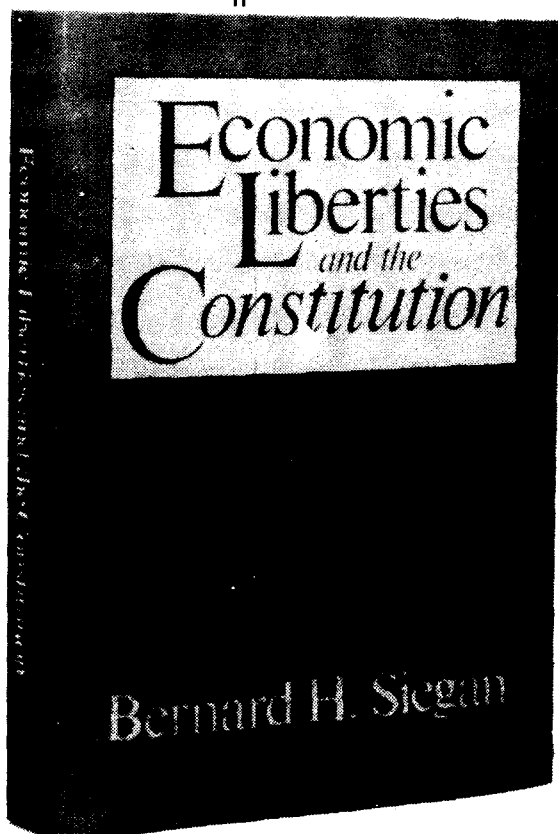
A pattern of non-white pressure-

group politics is emerging, rather on the American model, with a notional "equality" as its stated aim, but actually reaching toward a privileged status for minorities. These new organizations are beginning to reject previous efforts at assimilation, which came mostly from the white side of the community. Both Asians and West Indians have tended for their part to cling to a form of cultural and social apartheid, which is now hardening. To combat attacks, vigilante groups are forming in the larger urban centers. The Trotskyists continue to batten on racial tension, and are having some successes at the local level. In the London boroughs of Brent, Camden, Islington, and Wandsworth the left-dominated Labour parties are recruiting large numbers of Asians, some of whom cannot speak English, in order to pack meetings which select candidates for council elections. Similar campaigns are under way in the Midlands city of Leicester and in the Northwest.

These moves are (at the moment) important mainly in the context of the Labour party's own civil war. They underline the fact that Labour has, for the time being, ceased to be a

"This timely and important book

shows how far we have drifted from protecting basic liberties that the Framers of the Constitution sought to secure. I recommend it highly"—Edwin Meese, Counselor to the President



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credible alternative for governing Britain. The vacuum may be filled by the new Social Democratic Party, who are trying to present themselves as a refuge from both Labour extremists and the tough Toryism of Mrs. Thatcher. They have tried, rather fatuously, to imply that Mrs. Thatcher is the right-wing equivalent of Tony Benn, and claimed that a "centre" policy can find a less uncomfortable way to put Britain back on its economic and social feet. What this amounts to in terms of detailed policy is not yet clear, but we have a great deal of rhetoric to be going on with, about "changing attitudes," "participatory democracy," "equality," and the general plea that everyone should be nicer to each other all round. There is talk about increased public spending—to be financed by borrowing—and higher taxes, and "some kind of wages policy." The recipe is familiar in outline: the same one which has been cooked at Westminster for the past two and a half decades, and which landed Britain in the mess of 1979. The people who lead the Social Democrats are the spiritual heirs of the Edwardian radical chic, who espoused Socialism out of a bourgeois *noblesse oblige*, meaning to better the lot of downtrodden workers and the poor. Today's workers are anything but downtrodden, and Britain's poor are mostly the ghetto non-whites who have been co-opted by Trotskyists. There remains the problem of financial support for the new party. Without the backing of any major economic interest, and depending entirely on membership subscriptions to survive, they will have a hard and very uphill fight. The moderates who remain with Labour have not yet given up hope that the deserters—principally Mrs. Shirley Williams, Dr. David Owen, and William Rodgers—will have a change of heart and rejoin the fold.

Meanwhile, the sheep still inside continue to savage each other. The "real Socialists" on the Left, with the egregious Tony Benn in the vanguard, loudly hawk a centralist view of government not unlike that of classical fascism. They intend to impose it on the country by abolishing the House of Lords and creating a unicameral Parliament which would be dominated by a new sort of MP. Labour party rules were changed at the last conference to aim for selection of MPs who would not represent all their constituents as at present, but function strictly as party delegates, absolutely bound by the party manifesto. This Supreme Soviet is the favored idea of Benn, who in his own words has "often thought of the

parallel between Castro entering Havana and a new government entering power here . . . the two events should be as similar as possible." His apparent intention is to remake Britain into a blend of human battery farm and the Big Rock Candy Mountain, ruled by

. . . an immense, protective power which is alone responsible for securing people's enjoyment and watching over their fate. That power is absolute, thoughtful of detail, orderly, provident, and gentle. . . . It provides for [the citizens'] security, foresees and supplies their necessities, facilitates their pleasure, manages their principal concerns, directs their industry, makes rules for their testaments, and divides their inheritances. . . . Equality has prepared them for all this, predisposing them to endure it and often even to regard it as beneficial. [Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, Volume II, Part iv, Chapter 6.]

Benn has a plan for the eventuality; the most detailed, it is said, ever drawn up for a Labour administration. It is supposed to include a blueprint for massive nationalization, taking in all industry which still remains in private hands and extending into areas such as banking and the media. The policies on taxation and spending which lie behind all this would, according to Labour moderate Harold Lever (an economic expert), stir up a "financial hurricane." The foreign policy would feature withdrawal from the EEC, unilateral nuclear disarmament, asking the Americans to go home, and probably abandonment of NATO. In effect, Britain would become a kind of European Cuba.

Or would it? Benn and his friends count on a colossal débâcle for Mrs. Thatcher to prepare the country for their new order. But even with an electoral success it is unlikely that Britain could be forced into such a procrustean bed. There would be severe problems with the police—not noted for their left-wing tendencies—and with the armed forces (Benn is currently denouncing them for using Ulster to "prepare for the effects of monetarism"). Possibly the Left are counting on the power of the unions to help impose a People's Republic on the country. But this is not a solid proposition. Frank Chapple of the Electrical Workers has already declared support for the Social Democrats. Sidney Weighell, who heads the powerful National Union of Railwaymen, has derided Benn as a "Socialist with a silver spoon in his mouth," and said that if Benn tried to enforce a loyalty oath as he did at the last party conference, "I'd spit in his eye." These and other elements in

the TUC are rallying to try and reverse the recent changes in Labour party rules, but on this the TUC is as splintered as the party itself.

If union opposition and Britain's terrible vulnerability to world economic currents do scuttle Mrs. Thatcher and her policies, an alliance of Social Democrats and Liberals—on the evidence of current opinion polls—might win an election. Votes may after all be cast for the illusion of "something new": a "new" party, with "new plans," "new policies," a "new direction," a "new realignment in British politics"—a new everything except the one thing which is never mentioned: a new electorate which will provide the commitment upon which all government depends. At the moment the opposition, and many union leaders on the Left, are doing all they can to destroy commitment (Labour goes further than this, what with Michael Foot—and certain MPs on the far-Left fringe—openly trying to incite insurrection over unemployment). This has been the technique of opposition for a long time, and has tended to shape a sulky, greedy, and passive electorate with an atmosphere in which government is expected to be a system of institutionalized bribery, with the biggest bribes going to those (they happen to be unions at the moment) who are powerful enough to extort them.

Most of the extortion and opposition demagoguery takes place to the accompaniment of loud bellowings about "democracy" and "democratic" government. This litany is chanted, especially by Social Democrats and Labour, as though democracy were the great touchstone of government and the bulwark of freedom in the United Kingdom. It sounds bizarre if one remembers that the British franchise is based on property, and that Britain has no tradition of democracy at all, or none of long standing. For the past few hundred years the British have been used to rule by a congeries of local and regional oligarchies, loosely overseen by a Parliament which was never fairly representative of the people at large and is not now. This is widely recognized in Britain, and both Social Democrats and Liberals call for a new system of proportional representation. Their mechanistic view of government ignores the fact that British liberties have never been rooted in "democracy" or the messy, anomalous system of government, but have been guaranteed by custom and the law.

Both of these guarantees are under great strain, and not only from a view of government which sees it as an

automatic machine which will, if only it is manipulated properly, make everyone happy. Legislation is no longer presented in the form of laws, i.e. principles which apply equally to everyone. Instead we have administrative acts which usually apply to specific groups. Then there are ominous attempts to play the racist ace of spades, although it should be said that the extremist political acme of the crazy right is not an ailment to be taken seriously—yet. The Labour party's clear aim to play this nasty card in the next general election as it is doing now at local level may be much more important.

In this kingdom, made up of three nations and part of a fourth, it has become an irritating cliché of political discourse that "national unity" must somehow be "restored." Such a unity has never existed here, even in the English part which is, now as always, highly regionalized. Another refrain is that the "greatness" of Britain must be resurrected. This notion derives mainly from folk memories of the Victorian "empire," with vast red maps, triumphs over lesser breeds, and the satisfactions of enormous affluence and power. Of course no one believes that the "empire" can be literally revived. But over all shades of the political spectrum, from deep blue to blood red, there hangs a superstition, a pervasive hunch that "greatness" is somehow endemic in the people of these islands.

One remembers well enough the boost that such sentiments gave to the careers of Hitler and Mussolini, and there is certainly nothing in the blood of the British that makes them immune to authoritarianism. They did, after all, throw up the prototype of Franco in the person of Oliver Cromwell, and the presence of a number of mini-Cromwells in the trade union movement shows that this capability is far from dead. Certain popular patterns of thinking are worrying: Misery of any sort is automatically equated with "injustices," special interests tend to be accepted as "special cases" entitled to special consideration and money; employment is portrayed as a "right," as are all the benefits of the welfare state. The National Health Service is referred to as "free," for example, when it happens to be extremely expensive to the taxpayer. None of these privileges are thought of or spoken of (except by Mrs. Thatcher and some of her supporters) as commodities which have to be earned. They are deserved, *tout court*, and that is enough. It is as

though British society were evolving along the lines of F.A. Hayek's *Road to Serfdom*.

That said, it has become a fashionable game during the past ten years to predict one or another tyranny for the United Kingdom. Novelists, playwrights, newspapers, magazines, and television have all played this Orwell-monopoly: Cast your dice, pick a card, go directly to a dictatorship; do not pick up your human rights, do not pass go. With all the poison in the political atmosphere (and there has been nothing like it since the seventeenth century), there is still far more resilience in the social and economic fabric of Britain than one might imagine from the dema-

gogy of Michael Foot or Tony Benn. Paradoxically, the surly indiscipline of the unions, which has done so much economic harm, remains a sporadic source of flexibility and strength in the body politic—though there is an important caveat to this. Loyalty to unions has repeatedly been placed before the public interest, and sometimes exploited for ugly political purposes. Protestant workers literally struck down the Sunningdale Agreement on power-sharing in Ulster in 1974. Strikes brought down the Heath government in the same year, and destroyed support for Callaghan in 1979, and these are not the only cases in point. The latest attack by a union on government policy is the

Civil Servants' "industrial action." With the single exception of the hideous "winter of discontent," none of these maneuvers has aroused real public anger. This suggests a public opting out of the political process, except for the ritual casting of a vote, as villagers kill the corn spirit and set up a new straw figure to make a better harvest next year. There is an apparent willingness to gape passively as government and pressure groups battle it out, the electorate never considering the government as guardian of the public interest.

If Mrs. Thatcher's gamble succeeds, she may be able to modify or reverse this process. There are those

who are more interested in her failure than in the recovery of Britain. But so far she has been a stimulant to morale, even among her opponents—something the British electorate needs far more than any electoral bribe. The public may sense this, and it may be why even a Socialist taxi-driver is willing to give her a chance. Certainly she is the luckiest political leader since Harold Macmillan, but whether this will carry her through the next couple of years is another matter. So far neither the Tories nor any other party have a credible substitute for her or for her policies. If she is knocked down it will be very bad luck—not just for her, but for Britain, too. □



J.C. SUPERSTAR

by Michael Ledeen

The event of the month was of course the "Jimmy" scandal in the *Washington Post*. In a way this was like the story of the idol with clay feet, for it brought home to the press what the public had long realized: Journalists had been corrupted along with everyone else, and were no more reliable than anyone else. Of course, the psychological effects on the *Post*'s self-proclaimed stars were shattering: Bob Woodward had been warned about the "Jimmy" story, but didn't check it out, and it seems that even the great Ben Bradlee had had his chances earlier, but stuck with the story when it was challenged by the Washington police force and the mayor.

A lot has been made of the operational failure: No editor insisted that Ms. Janet Cooke, the author of the fraud, identify the real source of the story. That is, she was never made to give the actual name of "Jimmy" and/or "Jimmy's" pusher and/or mother to an editor at the *Post*. At a meeting in Washington just after the scandal, members of the American Society of Newspaper Editors permitted themselves the self-serving observation that if the

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Post's editors had done their job right, the story would never have been published. They went on to explain that this meant the journalist should have been forced to share her source(s) with her editor.

Similar remarks were made by Anthony Lewis and Abe Rosenthal at the *New York Times*, with the latter quoted as saying that if a journalist didn't feel like identifying his sources to an editor at the *Times*, said journalist could find another newspaper to write for.

It seems to me that these remarks miss the point, which is the old problem of "what is the truth?" In a city like Washington there is never a lack of sources for whatever you wish to establish. On the sort of problems I work on, for example (foreign policy, intelligence questions, strategic issues), I generally get directly conflicting information from excellent sources. And I could satisfy the most exigent editor on the matter of sources, even giving names and telephone numbers of people who would confirm what they had said. Yet in many cases the story would be wrong, and could be demonstrated to be wrong by adequate footwork and brainwork.

William Safire got at this question in his usual cunning way when he admitted that he himself had got

stories wrong in the past. Indeed, he had got one wrong just the week before, when he found a way to blame his favorite scapegoat—Secretary of State Haig—for an AWACS decision that Haig had actually opposed. But you may be sure that Safire had an excellent source (if not more than one) for his story, and that any editor limiting himself to checking the source would have been satisfied.

So the issue is accuracy, not sources. And this means that editors have to check the story, and not just the sources. This is terribly hard work, and if done meticulously might deprive the editors of long, leisurely lunches and banker's hours: the sort of life-style that has been adopted by some (only some) types at major newspapers. But the major problem here is not energy, concentration, or even (for the most part) good will; rather the problem is one of knowledge and capacity. There are very few living people capable of checking out the majority of foreign news stories coming in to a major newspaper every day. Indeed, there are

very few that can check the stories coming out of the Washington bureaucracy in a normal 24-hour period. Worse still, all news operations, whether papers or TV or radio, run on deadline, and have to "beat the competition." The economics of the news business requires that if you think your competition is "going" with a certain story, you "go" with it also, to avoid being "scooped."

Let's stop to take stock: The journalists are going to get some stories wrong, the editors are going to be unable to check them out, even if they are scrupulous and very hard-working, and the nature of the news game precludes editors' taking the proper time to check out the stories on a day-by-day basis. Conclusion: Much of what gets printed and/or broadcast is going to be false. (Marginal note: But shouldn't we insist that articles nominated for Pulitzer Prizes be checked out? And how can those stories be checked if the publications themselves do the nominating? And if the board just reads the stories without looking into the facts?)

My impression from the hundreds of letters to the editors in Washington and New York is that the public knows all this, even if there is some fuzziness about the details. The two columnists who managed to draw attention to the "truth" issue were Mary McGrory and Meg Greenfield



(is it a coincidence that both are women?), with the latter stressing the decline of professional standards (she as much as said that much of what appears between quotation marks in the daily press was not said word for word, but rather represents a "composite" or a "sense of the speaker").

This is a fairly grim picture, and it cannot be brightened by the brave

words of editors and ombudsmen who constantly tell us that the *Post* (or whatever) is a "great newspaper." The way the news business is run these days, there are no great newspapers in the United States. And hope for change is not bolstered by Ben Bradlee calling Janet Cooke a "helluva writer." How would he know? Has he checked anything she wrote?

The only measures that would encourage me are those aimed at establishing a proper respect for the truth. That means that newspapers have to correct themselves if, as I assume, they will not restrain themselves from publishing and/or broadcasting stories that haven't been checked out completely. My guess is that every paper can find at least one full column per week in order to cor-

rect past errors. And they ought to do it systematically, not in the mealy-mouthed way currently practiced. These days there's a little box that says, "in Monday's *Blurb* we said that according to the CIA 95 persons were killed by terrorism in 1975. The actual figure is 950." No one understands the significance unless they keep clips and go back to see what the context was. One would hope that a paper would have the courage to say something like, "the *Blurb* wrongly said . . . the truth is . . . and that means that our story considerably overstated the case when it quoted sources to the effect that the CIA previously considered terrorism a minor phenomenon."

To return to Janet Cooke: One of the most fascinating aspects of the story is the *Post*'s decision to stand by it when it came under attack from Washington, D.C. officials. I share with the *Post* a low esteem for many of these officials, but there is no question that the *Post*'s response was politically conditioned. Woodward said so when interviewed by the *Post*'s ombudsman. According to Woodward, "we went into our Watergate mode," which means that the newspaper stonewalled, blindly endorsed their journalist, and hit the government. It's interesting that Woodward should refer to Watergate, for there's a whole chapter of *All the President's Men* that tells of the time when Woodward and Bernstein wrongly accused a Nixon administration official of making certain statements to a grand jury. When the White House slammed the *Post* for the story, and Woodward and Bernstein had in fact confirmed with a lawyer that they had got the story wrong, Bradlee issued a ringing endorsement of Woodward and Bernstein, and stood by the story. Not to put too fine an edge on it, according to their own account, Woodward and Bernstein wrote a lie, and their editor, knowing it to have been false, endorsed it. The only difference in the Cooke affair is that when the paper "stood by the story" it did not know that it was false.

But in each case the reflex was the same: Given the choice between a reporter's version of the truth and the government's version, the paper opted for the reporter. The truth got lost in the (political) shuffle. Events of this sort convince the public that the press is unreliable, and the public is right.

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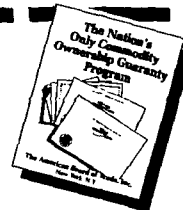
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emotional obituary for James Brady, only to discover later that Brady was alive. I watched Dan Rather excoriate Alexander Haig for confusing the chain of command (or Constitutional authority) in the executive branch, and then heard Jeff Greenfield a couple of days later on CBS say that Rather had "cooly" discussed the event. Indeed, during those hours immediately after the shooting in Washington, we saw an arrogant and rude bunch of journalists lambasting administration spokesmen for failing to confirm rumors or to provide detailed information, even though every journalism school student and every law student has been told repeatedly that in such a situation it is virtually impossible to get accurate information. I offer an award to Marvin Kalb and Edwin Newman for refusing to endorse the rumors (like Brady's death), and for reminding viewers that although many people were going to draw conclusions from the lack of confirmed information, they should not do it.

Moral: Since television feels it *must* do "live" coverage of confusing events, the TV reporters and editors ought to take the time to explain to viewers that much of what is broadcast will undoubtedly turn out to be wrong later on. And when it does turn out to be wrong, the broadcasters and journalists should not insinuate and imply that the government lied, or distorted, or misled. When a president is shot, the confusion will be so great that lots of people will misspeak, lots of rumors will circulate, and the truth will be very hard to come by. That's the way life is, and the reporters should be rather more modest about their own abilities to figure out what is correct simply by the way it sounds or looks or smells. Of course, this sort of confusion is one of the reasons I rarely watch TV, except for children's programs and sports events. The newspapers, bad as they are, are better.

The last reflection of the Janet Cooke story is the "racism" angle. As you can well imagine, there was considerable gossip around Washington that Ms. Cooke had advanced at the *Post* not because of her journalistic ability, but because of her beauty and charm. Some black writers immediately concluded that the "real" tragedy of the affair was that it revived hostility to blacks in the profession, gave encouragement to racists, and threatened equal opportunity programs in the newspapers. Tony Day, the editorial page editor of the *Los Angeles Times* (and

a good editorial page it is, too) said that editors ought to "turn this point of view aside before it hurts feelings and gets us in trouble." I quite agree that the Cooke story has little if anything to do with racism (lies are color blind), although one must point out that Bradlee said his confidence in the story came in part from the fact that Cooke is black, and hence ought to have better understanding of, and contacts in, the black community than a white journalist. But there is no question about the fact that equal opportunity programs have sometimes led to a decline in standards, especially here in Washington where everyone in the government bends over backwards to avoid the slightest tinge of racism. Or has Mr. Day forgotten the saga of the State Department, which was ordered to change its Foreign Service Examination until the results conformed to the pre-established racial quotas (ethnic balance, I mean) so dear to the Justice Department? Now, the *Washington Post* does not do that sort of thing: It has a choice of really talented and highly trained people every year, and can afford the luxury of meeting its

quotas (I mean, improving its ethnic balance) with very high-quality minority representatives. So the insinuation that Cooke was favored because she was black, is nonsense. If anything, the fact of her being black—in this case, at least—would suggest she was rather more talented than the usual new journalist.

• • •

Disinformation: Before the debate over disinformation gets out of hand, one should observe that the term is almost always misused in the press. There is a Bureau (or perhaps it's a "Directorate") of Disinformation in the Russian KGB, and its role is to purvey a systematically distorted picture of reality of both Soviet and Western realms. IT IS NOT SIMPLY A MATTER OF SENDING OUT THE ODD LIE. So that when the Russians embark upon a disinformation campaign, their goal is to paint themselves as peace-loving, driven to their military programs by (reasonable) fear of the aggressive West. And conversely, to show us as irrationally

militaristic and imperialistic. Space does not permit examples this month, but I'll get back to it—in detail—next time.

There is one big point, however, that has to be made: Our information about their world is very poor indeed, and on this there are three examples at hand: The first is the nuclear plant tragedy in Russia in the late fifties, that only emerged in the last couple of years. The second is the story of the Gulag Archipelago, only presented by Solzhenitsyn a few years ago. The third is a truly sensational story that I heard on BBC in mid-April (and have yet to see in the American press). According to the BBC, an article appeared in Peking, signed by a leading Chinese authority, saying that during the "great leap forward" Mao's agricultural policies (late 1950s, early 1960s) led to the death by starvation of between ten and twenty *million* Chinese. Remember the way so much of the Western press hailed Maoism? The suppression of this story for twenty-some odd years is a tactical move; the picture of Maoism as a great success is disinformation. Got it? □



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A GREAT PAIR OF EGGS

by Philip F. Lawler

In July 1969, the *Eagle* landed. Man walked on the moon. And *Time* magazine, in its coverage of the story, canvassed the country to report American reactions. One delightful anecdote came from a *Time* correspondent in the Midwest. In a small neighborhood bar, when the news came over the television, a little old lady jumped to her feet, raised her stein, and led the assembly in singing the Star Spangled Banner.

A wonderful vignette, isn't it? Just one problem. It isn't true. The *Time* reporter made up the story, as he sat comfortably at his desk. He thought it added a nice touch to his report, and of course it did.

No harm done, right? Perhaps that particular little old lady didn't really exist, but there was a little bit of her in every one of us. And somewhere, sometime, some little old lady probably *did* give a pot-valiant rendition of the national anthem. The details might not be accurate, but the gist of the story rings true.

In September 1980, the *Washington Post* carried a richly detailed investigative piece by staff reporter Janet Cooke, depicting the horrific life of an 8-year-old heroin addict identified only as "Jimmy." The heart-rending tale brought immediate calls for reforms and investigations, and on April 15 the *Post* proudly announced that Cooke had won a Pulitzer Prize. On April 16, the *Post* ran an embarrassing sequel: The Prize had been withdrawn. Cooke had resigned. The story was a fraud. Jimmy did not exist.

Although some readers (notably DC's Mayor Marion Barry) had doubted the "Jimmy" story all along, the deception did not emerge until the Pulitzer committee made its announcements. In a biographical statement to the Pulitzer committee, Cooke had awarded herself a bachelor's degree (*magna cum laude*) from Vassar and a master's from the

University of Toledo. The announcement of these credentials came as a surprise to both schools. One question led to another, and within hours the *Post* editors were cross-examining Cooke about Jimmy. Eventually she broke down and confessed her fraud to the interrogators, led by Managing Editor Howard Simons and Assistant Managing Editor Bob Woodward.

Bob Woodward. Remember him?

Several years previously, Woodward had copped his own Pulitzer for investigative reporting—reporting that eventually led to the resignation of President Nixon. Surely Woodward, of all people, was qualified to sit in judgment of Janet Cooke.

Bob Woodward knows the frustrations that an investigative reporter encounters. During their investigation of the Watergate scandal, he and his partner Carl Bernstein often found themselves working on the basis of rumors. They needed corroborating evidence. Fortunately for them, Woodward had a friend: an anonymous source code-named "Deep Throat." Throughout the development of the Watergate investigation, Deep Throat consistently offered confirmation of stories that

would otherwise have been too sketchy to print.

But here is a curious thing about Deep Throat: No one but Woodward ever met him. Not even Bernstein. Woodward and his informant developed an elaborate code of signals, and arranged meetings in an underground parking garage in the wee hours of the morning to avoid detection. Woodward never divulged his friend's identity.

Once—just once—someone at the *Post* pressed Woodward about Deep Throat. In *All the President's Men*, Woodward and Bernstein describe a breakfast meeting with publisher Katherine Graham:

Woodward said that he had told no one the name of Deep Throat.

Mrs. Graham paused. "Tell me," she said.

Woodward froze. He said that he would give her the name if she wanted. He was praying she wouldn't press it. Mrs. Graham laughed, touched his arm and said she was only kidding, she didn't really want to carry that burden around with her. Woodward took a bite of his eggs, which were cold.

Too bad about those eggs, of course, but don't the *Post* editors have a wonderful sense of confidence

in their reporters? Deep Throat never offered any revelations. He just made it respectable to print items off the grapevine. Although he had access to myriad sources of information about Watergate, he never divulged anything that Woodward had not heard elsewhere. Oh, yes, once or twice he did volunteer something new; he periodically advised Woodward that the Watergate story was much more important than anyone realized. No doubt Woodward enjoyed relaying that advice to his bosses.

Who was Deep Throat? To this day, no one knows. There are rumors, of course, but they are contradictory. Despite the fact that he could have made a small fortune by publishing his memoirs, despite the fact that everyone in Washington (the city where there are no secrets) sought to identify him, despite the fact that magazine publishers have lusted for an article revealing his identity—despite all these things, Deep Throat remains anonymous today, seven years after he appeared as the hero of *All the President's Men*.

Now consider what we know about Deep Throat. From the descriptions available in that book, we know that he held an "extremely sensitive" position in the Executive Branch. He had access to information from the White House, the Committee to Re-Elect the President, the Justice Department, and the FBI. Despite his paranoid fear of being followed, he stopped past Woodward's apartment virtually every day—over a period of months when Woodward twice moved to new locations—to check for their secret signal. If he wanted a meeting, he left a message in the newspaper at Woodward's front door. He was voluble, emotional, unable to conceal his feelings. He loved literature. He and Woodward had been good friends before the Watergate story broke, and had often spent pleasant evenings in conversation. He smoked and drank (Scotch), occasionally to excess. He lost weight noticeably during the



Philip F. Lawler is Managing Editor of Policy Review.

peak of the Watergate frenzy. And yet, with all that information, no one has been able to identify him.

Of course, Deep Throat might really exist. No one truly knows, except Bob Woodward—and, I suppose, maybe Deep Throat himself. But surely it requires more imagination to believe in Deep Throat than it does to envisage Woodward, an ambitious young reporter, inventing a source who could conveniently corroborate the details of a hot news story. Bob Woodward, meet Janet Cooke. Deep Throat, meet Jimmy.

After making his bones on the Watergate story, Woodward enjoyed two more signal successes in investigative journalism. In *The Final Days*, he and Carl Bernstein depicted whole, detailed scenes from White House life, again relying on anonymous sources for most of their information. And in *The Brethren*, Woodward and Scott Armstrong reconstructed the private thoughts and emotions of Supreme Court Justices, using reports from anonymous third parties. These stories evidently satisfied the highest canons of *Washington Post* journalism, because Woodward was promoted to his current spot as Assistant Managing Editor. Now he supervises the investigations of lesser mortals like Janet Cooke.

What sort of rules does Woodward enforce on his subordinates? The *Post* is not unique in its willingness to rely on anonymous sources; much of what passes for "investigative journalism" is woven together from leaks, background briefings, and off-the-record interviews. In such cases, when the source is not named, the story is no more reliable than the reporter's own word. And the reporter's word is no more reliable than the paper's reputation. How does an editor protect his reporters and at the same time control his reader's queries?

An occasional anonymous quotation adds spice to a story. In some cases, little else. But in other cases, an anonymous source can transform a tired old story into a sensation. When a politician attacks his rival through the press, even the dullest of readers knows that the politician has an ax to grind. But when that same politician is quoted anonymously, his tawdry motives disappear. Suddenly, he is an "informed source." So every backstabber and slanderer in Washington can manipulate the press. And the press gleefully obliges, chortling about the First Amendment and the public's right to know.

In Britain, where libel laws and press ethics are more scrupulously observed, a reporter who abuses his

investigative powers can find himself serving time for contempt of court; judges do not recognize the reporter's putative right to shield his source. But in America, top newspapers are eager to fight against disclosure of reporters' notes. In the Janet Cooke episode, the *Post* stood by its reporter even after an all-out police effort had failed to locate Jimmy. City editor Milton Coleman

admits that he himself began to doubt the story ("I thought the police would have found him in three days at the outside"), but still the *Post* held its ground. The show must go on. Let the reader beware.

In an editorial on the day the "Jimmy" hoax was uncovered, the *Washington Post* seemed to claim that the editors' mistake was understandable. As they pointed out,

You just do not read a many-paged memorandum from an apparently reliable reporter, relating her visit to and prolonged conversation with several people in great detail, and then inquire: "Say, did any of this actually happen?"

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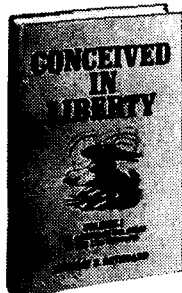
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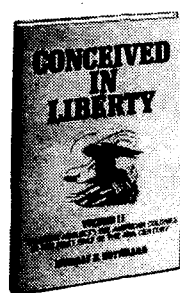
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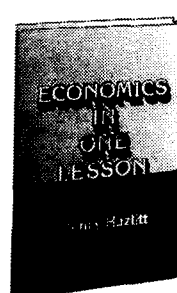
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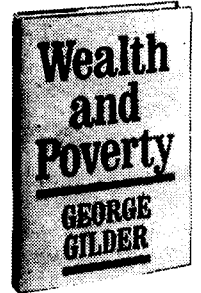
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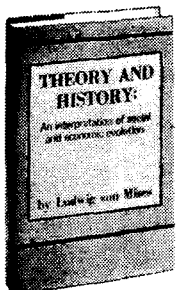
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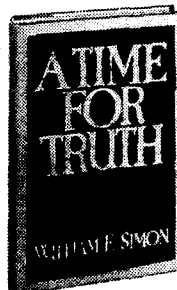
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Journal, the Cooke episode raised serious questions about racial preference, to wit: "To what extent do the pressures facing big-city papers to recruit and promote promising minorities cloud the initial hiring procedures—as well as the decisions as to which of their stories should be published?" Perhaps because they were anxious to hire a black woman, the *Post* never checked the claims on Janet Cooke's résumé: that she had won a Phi Beta Kappa key; that she was fluent in four languages; that she was a virtuoso pianist; that she had studied at the Sorbonne, won several journalism awards, and been offered a job by Woodward's old pal, Carl Bernstein, at ABC News. The Pulitzer committee showed the same willingness to overlook details. Despite the fact that the "Jimmy" story was not

one of the finalists nominated by a Pulitzer jury, and despite that fact that at least one board member openly challenged the reliability of the story, Janet Cooke copped the award. That award, the *Wall Street Journal* reported, provoked considerable consternation both on the Pulitzer board and in the *Post* headquarters. (By the way, the *Journal* story included seven anonymous quotations.)

Less than a day after the Pulitzer announcement, the entire *Post* editorial staff knew that the story was a fraud. The editors had even checked over Cooke's notes and figured out how she had pieced together the story from various unrelated bits of information. Bob Woodward confronted Cooke with the vow that he knew the story was a phony and

"I'm going to prove it if it's the last thing I do." But of course he could not prove it. That's the very nature of an anonymous source: No one can ever prove that he doesn't exist.

Still, Woodward and his colleagues continued their questioning until at last Cooke confessed. Why was that confession so important? Every editor knew that the story had been fabricated. Every editor knew that Cooke had lied repeatedly about her background, her credentials, and her research. Yet the *Post* would not—could not—print a retraction until the reporter herself confessed. Why not?

Because if Janet Cooke cannot be written off as an aberration, the whole genre of investigative jour-

nalism is cast in doubt. If the *Post* editors had admitted that Jimmy was a palpable fraud, how strongly could they insist that Deep Throat is an unimpeachable source? How long could other editors at papers all around the country guarantee the existence of their own unnamed sources? By forcing Janet Cooke to confess her unique private sin, the *Post* thought to extirpate the doubts that every sensible reader should have whenever any reporter uses unattributed quotations or unnamed sources. As Bob Woodward surely realized, the Jimmy story is just the tip of the iceberg.

So much for investigative journalism. Now a quiz: Was there, or was there not, a little old lady singing the national anthem in a neighborhood bar? How do you know? □



PICTURE THIS EXHIBITION

by Olivier Todd

After "Berlin-Paris," "Paris-New York," "Paris-Moscow"—which granted some concessions to Soviet officials and art negotiators—the Beaubourg Center is presenting in May, under a title suitable for a musical or even a cancan chorus line, "Paris-Paris," another retrospective on artistic production in France from 1937 to 1957.

In Hall 8 ("The Occupation"), between tracts and posters, between Dubuffet and Laurens, the organizers plan to set up works by Arno Breker, notably "The Wounded Warrior." It epitomizes this sculptor's stereotyped, propagandizing, and conformist style. "The Torch Bearer" and "The Sword Bearer" would have done as well—under their original titles: "The Party" (Nazi) and "The Wehrmacht."

Germain Viatte, in charge of the exhibition, views the work of Breker as symbolic of the period. Some artists, such as Brayer and Folon, find Breker's presence normal: it's documentation, cultural evidence, History, indiscriminate and amor-

phous eternity. Let's be against any form of censorship. Others, such as Alechinsky and Pol Bury, protest: They don't see that type of cultural evidence as completely neutral. And what if it were a link in the mended chain of a nostalgia? Street gangs are showing off their swastikas. Researchers are overcome with awe for Breker. Alain de Benoist adores this pagan and his glossy muscles. No connection. What are you looking for! Peace, perspective, objectivity!

Objectively speaking, Breker is now more than 80 years old. He works meticulously at busts of Adenauer, Senghor, Sadat, and—as he has done over the past 60 years or so—Aryan Apollos. He's not a bad sort. He even saved a few Jews. Much like Lieutenant Heller. He's been un-banned.

But what about his work? It helped Nazism to define itself culturally. An accident? It represents the little that Nazism has left in sculpture. Mere chance? Monographs on Breker are being revised. People ask for pre-faces. Breker refuses. They are published separately. In one of them Bernard Noel states that the only real

tie between Breker and Hitlerism was the Führer's taste for his sculpture. Unfortunate? The result was huge orders which blinded the sculptor then and now. He still does not understand that if the regime served his sculpture, it was because his sculpture likewise served the regime. It wasn't Breker who was a Hitlerite, Hitler was a Brekerite. Abstract art, "degenerate art," was crushed in both the USSR and Germany. Crushed and replaced by a Breker who is convinced that "under a national socialist regime, an artist has no worries at all!"

The Phidias of the Third Reich was, and still is, its universal and official artist. Conformist or opportunist? Furthermore, after the war, Stalin made overtures to him, before Franco and Peron. Nazism and Socialist Realism, the same battle really. At Beaubourg, we'll see if didacticism is pushed far enough or if Breker is presented to us as a pure artist. If Breker appears all of a sudden in Hall 8, let's hope that this is not seen as innocence dis-incarnate!

This event goes beyond a simple

case of monumental mediocrity. It illustrates the drifting of Beaubourg these days. Too many exhibitions are now conceived with a confusing and commonplace History as their only justification. A History that accommodates all fascism, red or white. We find works of great power alongside those of no interest: Breker with Hartung . . . How can the public sort through this? The last intoxicating review, "The Realisms," confirmed this frenetic transformation of exhibitions into archival collections.

As Soulages, one of the moderates who signed the petition, or rather the anti-Breker resolution, points out, "by dint of striving to find artistic roots merely by sociological criteria, one loses sight of the essential: emotional reaction to a work of art."

Officials, organizers, please don't give us the same thing in Hall 8 (Breker) and Hall 6 ("German prisoners," Wols, Bellmer, Ernst). Since you're out to equalize aesthetics and level off sensitivity, at least distinguish between political systems.

And, at the very least, don't let the school children confuse Picasso and Breker. □

Olivier Todd is an editor and columnist at *L'Express* magazine from which this essay is reprinted.



THE INTELLECTUALOIDS

ALVIN'S SONG

by Mitchell S. Ross

"In January 1950, just as the second half of the twentieth century opened, a gangling twenty-two-year-old with a newly minted university diploma took a long bus ride through the night into what he regarded as the central reality of our time. With his girlfriend at his side and a pasteboard suitcase filled with books under the seat, he watched a gunmetal dawn come up as the factories of the American Midwest slid endlessly past the rain-swept window."

That twenty-two-year-old, Alvin Toffler, was destined to become a prophet. His girlfriend, Heidi, was destined to become his wife and associate prophet. The above passage is an autobiographical pearl buried inside Toffler's most recent book of prophecy, *The Third Wave*. The third-person voice initially disguises the autobiographical nature of the passage but one paragraph later the veil is dropped and the memories pour forth:

I spent five years in those factories, not as a clerk or personnel assistant but as an assembly hand, a millwright, a welder, a forklift driver, a punch press operator—stamping out fans, fixing machines in a foundry, building giant dust control machines for African mines, finishing the metal on light trucks as they sped clattering and screeching past on the assembly line. I learned firsthand how factory workers struggled to earn a living in the industrial age.

I swallowed the dust, the smoke and steam of the foundry. My ears were split by the hiss of steam, the clank of chains, the roar of pug mills. I felt the heat as the white-hot steel poured. Acetylene sparks left burn marks on my legs. I turned out thousands of pieces of shift on a press, repeating identical movements until my mind and muscles shrieked. I watched the managers who kept the workers in their place, white-shirted men themselves endlessly pursued and harried by higher-ups. I helped lift a sixty-five-year-old woman out of the bloody machine that had just torn four fingers off her hand, and I still hear her cries—"Jesus and Mary, I won't be able to work again!"

*Morrow, \$14.95/Bantam, \$3.95 (paper).

Mitchell S. Ross is the author of *The Literary Politicians* and *An Invitation to Our Times*.

In brief, young Toffler had seen the present and had decided it didn't work. Moreover, the theoretical sentiments that had sustained him throughout those years in the factory weakened. "When I was a Marxist during my late teens and early twenties—now more than a quarter of a century ago—I, like many young people, thought I had all the answers. I soon learned that my 'answers' were partial, one-sided and obsolete." So he set his muscle relaxant and his copy of *Das Kapital* aside and ventured into journalism. He became a Washington correspondent. He conducted a *Playboy* interview with Vladimir Nabokov. He signed on as an associate editor of *Fortune* magazine. He continued his search for the truth. And one day, perhaps while disrobing and hearing Heidi lament the lost beauty of his legs, he determined to consecrate his life to the future.

While distinguishing himself as a Computer Age Ezekiel, Toffler taught at Cornell University and the New School for Social Research. He contributed "countless" (according to one of his book jackets) articles to newspapers, magazines, and scholarly journals. But it is his books that have made him famous. He has

published four, though I have not read two of them: *The Culture Consumers* is hard to find and *The Eco-Spasm Report* has an unpleasant title. No matter: Whoever has read Toffler's two most celebrated tomes has captured the essence and fragrance of the man.

These are, of course, *Future Shock* and *The Third Wave*. Like the Oberammergau Passion play, they have appeared at the start of decades: *Future Shock* in 1970 and *The Third Wave* in 1980. Millions have read these books and the publishers assure us that lives have been changed by them. Toffler's prophetic gift has been extolled all over the world. Among his most enthusiastic customers are the Japanese, who, I suspect, have secretly craved a

replacement for Douglas MacArthur ever since the old soldier faded away.

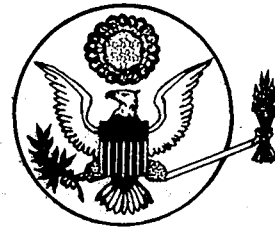
Recently he traveled to Japan under the sponsorship of NHK, the television network which also has a book publishing division. The Prophet Alvin subsequently briefed the *New York Times* on the experience.

Before my wife and I arrived in Tokyo, NHK had lined up a series of lectures. For the first one they invited 200 of the top industrialists plus an additional 200 people whose names were drawn at random from a pile of postcards by people who wrote in asking to attend. I spoke for about an hour and a half and a few nights later NHK telecast the entire lecture during prime time as "Alvin Toffler Speaks to the Japanese Nation."

The boys in the factory agreed that the ex-millwright had gone far. —

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Fearless Nobel dissident Andrei Sakharov smuggled a similar warning to the West in 1980 from his exile in Gorky.

Referring to the West, Marxist idol Lenin mocked "They will fight with each other to sell us goods...we will give a rope to the bourgeoisie...the bourgeoisie will hang itself with this rope."

The time for polite academic discouraging is over. It is time we stop standing in awe of the monster we have created; begin to nullify Sov-

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How did he do it? Well, to start, he found himself a Great Theme. This was change. Make that Change. Toffler saw that the world, having endured the agricultural (First Wave) and industrial (Second Wave) revolutions, was now in the midst of a post-industrial (Third Wave) revolution. Unfortunately, many other prophets saw the same thing, which meant Alvin would have to do

something different in order to have his voice heard above the roar. After lengthy communion with Heidi and a digital processor he began to manufacture thunder.

So *Future Shock* opens in an alarming manner:

In the three short decades between now and the twenty-first century, millions of ordinary, psychologically normal people will face an abrupt collision with the

future. Citizens of the world's largest and most technologically advanced nations, many of them will find it increasingly painful to keep up with the incessant demand for change that characterizes our time. For them, the future will have arrived too soon.

Technology has introduced both novelty and transience into the culture to a degree hitherto unknown. As a result the asses are tumbling over the

applecarts and average folks are wondering what the hell it all means.

Gazing out at the American landscape the Prophet Alvin saw many strange things come to pass. He was, for example, impressed by "the recent upsurge of rental activity in fields in which it was all but unknown in the past." To Toffler, the traveling salesman stepping up to the Hertz counter was not merely a man of commerce interested in efficient transportation; he was being swept along by "a spectacular new force [that] has emerged to challenge many of the most deeply engrained patterns of the automotive industry. This is the auto rental business."

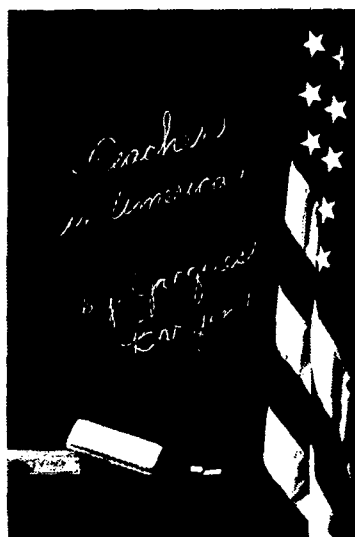
It took a Toffler to see the similarity between running through airports and filing for divorce. "Serial marriage—a pattern of successive temporary marriages . . . is the natural, the inevitable outgrowth of a social order in which automobiles are rented, dolls traded in, and dresses discarded after one-time use. It is the mainstream marriage pattern of tomorrow." This statement is corroborated by Professor Jessie Bernard, "a world-prominent family sociologist," according to Alvin.

In the cities and in the countryside, on the seas and in the air, our prophet saw Change upsetting people's lives. Where folks once simply assumed that nothing lasts forever Alvin confidently intoned "the Death of Permanence." Corporate and bureaucratic reorganizations portended nothing less than the death of bureaucracy and the coming of "Ad-hocracy." The demand for novelty had become insatiable. The man of the future would be more interested in collecting experiences than in collecting things. As Alvin put it in one of his most arresting formulations, "What happens to an economy when, as is likely, the entire concept of property is reduced to meaninglessness?" Would happy days be here again?

In the meantime we must be prepared to endure revolutionary tensions. In far off France "an angry outcry . . . has greeted the recent introduction of American-style drugstores in Paris . . . at Le Drugstore the thirsty Frenchman gulps a hasty milkshake instead of lingering for an hour or two over an apéritif at an outdoor bistro." Toffler perceived a European distaste for *Time* magazine. He suspected that not only culture shock, but future shock, was behind it.

Indeed, it may well be that the widespread European dislike for *Time*, itself, is not entirely political, but stems unconsciously from the connotation of its title. *Time*, with its brevity and breathless

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One can only regret that this intriguing analysis was not extended to explain the success of *Time's* French counterpart, *L'Express*.

Mindful of the hazards inherent in the task, Alvin argued that we must leap joyfully into the future. He pondered an immediate problem. "We have no objects, no friends, no relatives, no works of art, no music or literature, that originate in the future. We have, as it were, no heritage of the future." But he saw no reason why this should deter us: Proper social planning and education would steady the course of Spaceship Earth. The social planning should preferably be done by committee, and include such innovations as groups of culturalists meeting in New York and Paris to organize long-range artistic goals.

"Education must shift into the future tense." "Future" should be studied as history used to be and "science fiction should be required reading for Future I." Something of the medieval spirit should be revived, but, where folks used to envision heaven and hell, "We need now to propagate dynamic, nonsupernatural images of what temporal life will be like, what it will sound and smell and taste and feel like in the fast-onrushing future." "Today as never before we need a multiplicity of visions, dreams and prophecies—images of potential tomorrows." "We need to construct, 'utopia factories.'" "For, by making imaginative use of change to channel change, we cannot only spare ourselves the trauma of future shock, we can reach out and humanize distant tomorrows." With this final vision of humanized tomorrows the first of Alvin's two great books of prophecy comes to a close.

Four million copies of *Future Shock* were printed and, understandably, Alvin's faith in the future intensified. In the Introduction to *The Third Wave* he denounced the prophets of doom and proclaimed, "*The Third Wave* is for those who think the human story, far from ending, has only just begun." How did the second masterpiece differ from the first? "To begin with, it covers a much wider sweep of time—past as well as future. It is more prescriptive. Its architecture is different. (The perceptive reader will find that its structure mirrors its central metaphor—the clash of waves.)"

Alvin added a new wrinkle to his prophetic technique. He called it

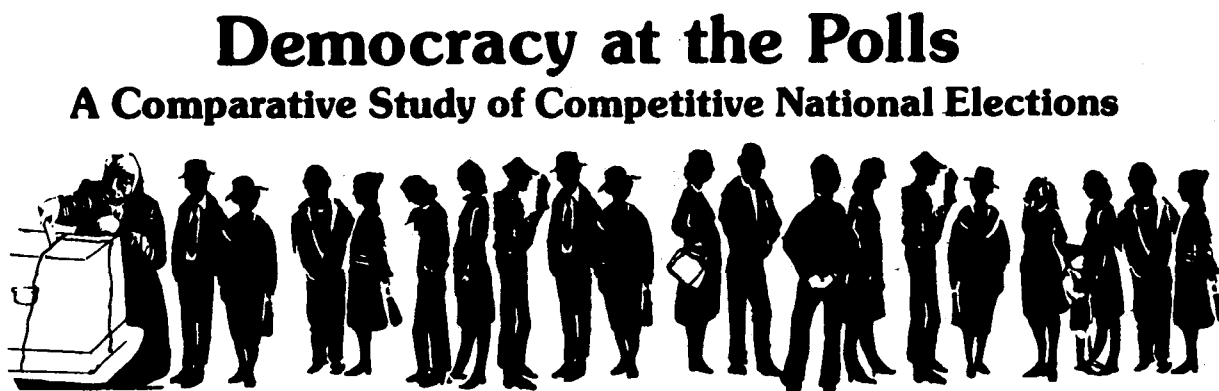
"social 'wavefront' analysis," which "looks at history as a succession of rolling waves and asks where the leading edge of each wave is carrying us." One of the great advantages of social wavefront analysis, it soon becomes evident, is that it enables Alvin to lump things together when lesser prophets might feel inclined to make trivial distinctions. Here is a sample: "While offering the obliga-

tory lip service to democracy and social justice, the Nixons, Carters, Thatchers, Brezhnevs, Giscard, and Ohiras of the industrial world rode into office by promising little more than efficient management." Recalling the great public debates of 1964 and other Soviet election years, one might wonder how Comrade Brezhnev found his way onto that list. Alvin would have little patience with such

small-minded quibbling. The important thing to remember is that the Soviet Union, like the United States and its chief allies, was a Second Wave nation, characterized by industrialism.

Seen in this perspective the real purpose of the electoral process can be detected:

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that they were still in command—that they could, in theory at least, dis-elect as well as elect leaders. In both capitalist and socialist countries, these ritual reassurances often proved more important than the actual outcome of many elections. . . . The fact that Soviet and Eastern European elections routinely produced magical majorities of 99 to 100 percent suggested that the need for reassurance remained at least as strong in the centrally planned societies as in the "free world."

An Albanian James Reston couldn't have put it any better.

Our social wavefront analyst-prophet's sense of history is as brilliantly original as his sense of the upheaval caused by the appearance of *Time* magazine in Europe. "By the middle of the nineteenth century," he writes, "every industrializing nation had its sharply defined left wing and its right, its advocates of

individualism and free enterprise, and its advocates of collectivism and socialism." Great Britain? The United States of America? By the middle of the nineteenth century the Webbs—not to mention Eugene V. Debs—had not yet begun their enlightenment of Second Wave civilization, so to whom is Alvin referring? As so often he grows reticent just when we need him most.

If only great men had the time for small matters of detail! Alvin can be awfully frustrating. Why, for example, does he cite C.P. Snow as the author of the notion that despair is a sin? This is as if I were to say, "My Uncle Norman once told me, 'Thou shalt not commit adultery.'" My way would be to quote the Lord God directly. Alvin, apparently, is too bashful to quote ancient sources. Perhaps he feels it doesn't sit well with his image as a man of the future.

"A new civilization is emerging in our lives, and blind men everywhere are trying to suppress it." He means all those Thatchers and Brezhnevs and other Second Wave types. But why does Alvin hate supporters of nuclear energy, too? Does it not after all represent one of the newer technologies? Never mind whether you are for nuclear energy or against it: In the context of social wavefront analysis the thing would seem to be unassailably Third Wave. Yet Alvin says it isn't so. We know that our prophet could not merely be pandering to his audience, and so this is puzzling.

Well, we must not be impudent. We must remember that we are discussing a man who had the moral grandeur to write,

I detest the way industrialism crushed First Wave and primitive peoples. I cannot forget the way it massified war and invented Auschwitz and unleashed the atom to incinerate Hiroshima. I am ashamed of its cultural arrogance and its depredations against the rest of the world. I am sickened by the waste of human energy, imagination and spirit in our ghettos and barrios.

To forgive, or at least ignore, Hitler, and blame industrialism: this is spiritual generosity. To equate Auschwitz and Hiroshima: this is social wavefront analysis at its most heroic.

Yes, I have heard it said that Alvin Toffler is nothing but a claptrap dialectician, a ninth-rate thinker, devoid of moral intelligence and common sense, who managed to retool the Marxism of his youth into highly profitable prophecy in middle age. I refuse to believe it. I am a child of the late twentieth century and I crave answers. I crave meanings. I crave hope. I want to believe in Alvin. I need to believe in him. And so, all ye of little futuristic faith, good night . . . and have a humanized tomorrow. □

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William Shawcross responds to Peter Rodman's dissection of *Sideshow*.

BOOK REVIEWS

About the only thing Bernard Crick doesn't tell us about George Orwell in this meticulous, infinitely painstaking, somewhat dogged and even wearisome *Life* is something Crick surely must know but, of course, could not be expected to reveal—to wit, why an authorized biography has been so long in coming. The fact that Orwell had stipulated in his last will, written two weeks before his death at age 46 in January 1950, that “no biography shall be written” certainly has nothing to do with the delay. After all, Orwell's widow, the late Sonia Orwell, almost at once asked Malcolm Muggeridge to write the biography, and Muggeridge worked on the project for a time, half-heartedly he admits, before giving it up. There must have been others after that. Anyhow, as he tells us in his Acknowledgements, Crick was signed on in 1972 and given unrestricted access to all the Orwell papers. Without being able to say that his work was worth waiting for, I can vouch for Crick's having done a thoroughly competent and candid portrait of one of the most eccentric and remarkable writers of the age. In the end, Orwell stands there before us, a bit ragged and misshapen, a kind of secular saint, part Don Quixote, part Savonarola, and so utterly honest as to seem a bit weird. Such men lend themselves, particularly among the godless, to canonization.

The faults of the book first. Like many contemporary biographers, Crick constantly errs on the side of inclusion. Rather too much, for example, is made of Orwell's early school days—that is, of the possible though not very probable impact of those days on the man the boy later became. In effect, too much is made of what we cannot know. Did he or did he not suffer a psychic wound while attending prep school? How reliable is his own account, in the essay “Such, Such Were the Joys,” of that early period? In his recollection of the punishment boys received from their schoolmasters, how much is fact and how much angry exaggeration? How accurate was Orwell in his description of the bed-wetting scenes? Crick's conclusion after

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GEORGE ORWELL: A LIFE Bernard Crick / Little, Brown & Co. / \$17.95

William H. Nolte

several thousand words: Who knows? Even better: Who cares? Again and again Crick poses questions which he knows cannot be answered beyond a peradventure. This stylistic mannerism, if that's the word, may be found throughout. What did Sonia Brownell, young, handsome, and popular as she was, see in Orwell, who was mortally ill when she married him three months before his death? Since the question is never answered, I see no reason for asking it. Besides, I think the answer to that question might be inferred from the context of things. Incidentally, following the death of his first wife, Eileen, in 1945, Orwell made two or three other such proposals while still on his legs, all of them rejected. In any case, the most intensely personal matters, to me at least, are the least interesting of his life.

What becomes clear from all this

digging, sifting, hypothesizing, and juggling of relevant and irrelevant facts or notions is that Orwell was too inordinately private a man to be very intriguing. He really lived only in his writing, and it is there, as he himself informed us, that we should look for him. Crick notes, “At times he almost literally cared for his writing more than his life, certainly more than his comfort and physical well-being.” In following his polestar, Orwell was to writing what Van Gogh was to painting. He was indifferent to the food he ate, to drink (unlike most men of his profession he was a weak boozier), to clothing, to his lodgings; in the final months he had to be forcibly restrained from using his typewriter in the hospital bed to which he was confined.

Few readers today consider Orwell

a great novelist, or even a very good one, despite *Animal Farm*, a masterpiece that Swift, Orwell's idol, might well have been proud to call his own. On the other hand, many think him one of the great writers of the twentieth century, a claim dependent largely, one must suppose, on his essays. Considering his output during the 1940s, when he often wrote as many as a hundred reviews and articles a year, I find it astonishing that he was able to maintain so high a standard. In the four volumes of *The Collected Essays, Journalism and Letters of George Orwell* (1968), which contain over two thousand pages, there is ample evidence to support the claims of his admirers. There is also plenty of evidence in those volumes to support V.S. Pritchett's remark, made shortly after Orwell's death, that he was “really an active moralist, a preacher who sees that oppression creates hypocrisy, and that hypocrisy corrupts.” In making such an assessment, Pritchett elevates the man but limits the artist. There is no reason to believe that great art might not be created during an intensely political age, like our own (as a matter of fact, however, there hasn't been much), though there is every reason to believe that a man so politically and morally involved with the period as was Orwell will be unable to create work that will live beyond his age. With few exceptions, and most of those belong to literary criticism, the essays are tied to the time in which they were written. In a word, most of his work even now, and it will appear even more so as time passes, is periodical.

Crick is doubtless correct when he says that after 1937 and the Spanish Civil War, in which Orwell fought and was badly wounded, Orwell's political views were fixed. Henceforth he would do battle for democratic Socialism (he always used the lower case “d” and the capital “S” on the words) and against totalitarianism wherever it appeared. Unlike the liberals, whom Orwell scorned, he was every bit as violent in his detestation of Soviet totalitarianism as he was of the Fascist variety—or of British imperialism, for that matter. In a letter to Arthur Koestler he railed against the left-wingers who since 1933 “have wanted to be anti-Fascist without being anti-totalitarian.” After the Hitler-Stalin pact,



Crick notes, Orwell renounced his anti-militarism or crypto-pacifism for much the same reasons as many intellectuals renounced the Communist Party." Henceforth, he would be a patriot even though that might mean being called upon to support a war fought on imperialistic as much as anti-Fascist lines.

A final curious and revealing note. In one of his "As I Please" columns written for *Tribune* in 1943, Orwell is defending the Socialists against the "pessimistic" charge that they are Utopians, who believe in human perfectibility. Not so, Orwell argues; the Socialists claim only that the world might be made better than it is. So far I have no objection; after all, every man has the right to choose his own poison. But then I read this eye-popping, brain-boggling passage: The only claims the Socialist makes is that the "problem of man's place in the universe . . . cannot be dealt with while the average human being's preoccupations are necessarily economic. It is all summed up in Marx's saying that after Socialism has arrived, human history can begin." Economically, historically, and, above all else, biologically, that last sentence is insane. I don't know whether to blame Marx or Orwell. But let it go. Or rather let it serve as a warning to the moralists. It may, just barely may, prevent one or two of them from falling into a similar ditch. □

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Arnold Beichman

Is or isn't the Soviet Union a supporter of international terrorism? The question is a lively one and the subject of an intense Washington debate.* Claire Sterling, in her important book, says the Russians are behind terrorist activities, that Western intelligence agencies know it but, for various reasons, are withholding the truth from their publics. In the meantime, the debate goes on.

Most recently, Judith Miller, a *New York Times* correspondent with high-level sources in the Reagan administration, reported (March 28, 1981) that a CIA draft report "had concluded that there is insufficient evidence to substantiate administration charges that the Soviet Union is directly helping foment international terrorism." Rep. Don Edwards (D., Calif.), chairman of a House sub-

*On April 24, the newly organized Senate Subcommittee on Security and Terrorism held a rather inconclusive one-day hearing chaired by Senator Jeremiah Denton. Claire Sterling, Arnaud de Borchgrave, Michael Ledeen, and William Colby testified.

Arnold Beichman's essay on terrorism, "A War Without End," appeared in the April 1978 issue of *The American Spectator*.

committee studying terrorism, has warned that we must resist demands to "surrender our liberties or our commitment to justice because of the alleged plottings of the Russians." Even so well-informed an analyst as Samuel T. Francis, now a member of Senator John East's staff, has written that there is not "sufficient evidence to prove that the Soviets directly or formally control, let alone coordinate or direct, many terrorist groups or activities."

But as noted above, the contention that the Soviets are not involved in international terrorism is the subject of a lively debate, so lively in fact that Francis himself is his own best disputant: "there is [however] massive evidence to show that Soviet support for terrorism is virtually essential for the scale and intensity of terrorist operations, for instigating a gradual public acceptance of terrorism as a 'legitimate' means of struggle and of public disavowal of those policies and institutions that alone can provide an effective counter-terrorist program."

The Reagan administration would appear to concur. Secretary of State Haig, himself a target of terrorist attack when he was NATO supreme commander, announced at his first press conference on January 28 that

the Soviet Union's "conscious policy" is directed to "the training, funding and equipping of international terrorism." And Richard V. Allen, National Security Adviser, claimed in late March that there is "ample evidence" that the USSR actively supports terrorism.

Sterling agrees with the Haig-Allen position and so do I. A veteran foreign correspondent based in Italy, and steeped in prolonged investigations of her own and those of other specialists, Sterling has gathered evidence sufficient to show that without the Soviet Union and satellites like Cuba, Czechoslovakia, and East Germany, international terrorism would be containable. Whether this evidence would stand up in a courtroom with Brezhnev in the dock protected by an "innocent-until-proven-guilty" shield is another matter. I really don't understand what the CIA is up to with its draft report.

I side with the Haig-Allen-Sterling thesis and against the CIA for one simple reason: The ideological foundations of Soviet foreign policy demand the use of terror as an accessory before and after the "inevitable" triumph of Soviet imperialism, a.k.a. world revolution. And within these ideological foundations, there is an important distinction to be made; a distinction which helps explain why it is so difficult to pin responsibility for world terrorism conclusively on the Soviets: Politburo realpolitik sees not terrorism but terrorists as the vehicle by which to achieve the overthrow of the Western democracies. On the one hand, Lenin was fearful of the "spontaneity of terrorism," that is, terrorism unavoidably free from Bolshevik control (although one must admit that the necessary corollary is that premeditated Soviet action will be undeterred and even aided by the vagaries of international terrorism, as in Lenin's favorite Napoleonic maxim, "on s'engage . . . puis on voit"). But writing of terrorists, Lenin said that revolutionary strategy demands "temporary alliances even with unreliable people; not a single party could exist without such alliances." Terrorists certainly fill the bill of "unreliable people."

Thus, while the final word on the strict letter of the Haig-Allen-Sterling thesis would resemble the old Italian adage "Si non e vero, e ben trovato"—even if it isn't true, it could be—when the thesis is shifted from Soviet direction of terrorism to active Soviet aid for terrorists, Claire Sterling's book is its proof:

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seller to the Czech Communist Party central committee for over twenty years, defected to the United States with a batch of documents which revealed that early in 1964, the Soviet Politburo decided to increase spending on terrorism abroad by 1,000 percent. Special guerrilla training schools were founded in satellite countries for "selected terrorists from all over the world."

- Every component of the Palestinian resistance has been trained and armed by the Soviets. As a result, according to Sterling, the Palestinians today are "the most formidable professional guerrilla army on earth." During the winter of 1978, each day saw at least seven Soviet-bloc ships unloading in Syrian and Lebanese ports, and five or six Antonov transports landing in Damascus.

- General Shlomo Gazit, in 1979 Israel's chief of intelligence, stated that a thousand Arab terrorists had been trained in fifty different Soviet-bloc military schools; some forty of these schools are in the Soviet Union itself.

- The Palestinians have become the Soviet Union's "chosen instrument" in passing on training, armaments, and strategy to apprentices from other countries.

- After his arrest in Spring 1980, Patricio Peci, an Italian Red Brigades commander, spoke of the training Red Brigades received in Czechoslovakia through the 1970s, and of the weapons received from Czechoslovakia by way of Hungary and Austria.

- John Barron's book *KGB* describes how a Russian agent, Viktor Sakharov, after defecting to the West, told of KGB terrorist activity in the Arab oil sheikdoms and in Turkey.

- The most suggestive evidence of Soviet complicity in international terrorism is the fact that no terrorist group of any persuasion has ever attacked Soviet diplomats, embassies, airline offices, or other property in the West, hijacked Soviet airplanes, or assassinated leaders or members of Communist parties in the West.

The evidence adduced by Sterling urges on us that view most clearly expressed by Dr. Ray S. Cline, formerly CIA Deputy Director:

It's important to realize that when you say the Soviet Union supports terrorism, you do not mean that they direct and command each terrorist activity. . . . What they do is supply the infrastructure of terror: the money, the guns, the training, the background information, the communications, the propaganda that will inspire individual terrorist groups.

To conceptualize the role of the Soviet Union in global terrorism is to come face to face with a model symbiotic relationship, in which the two

parties use each other for their own ends but also share an underlying common goal. Terrorism provides for the Soviet Union a means of undermining the power of the Western democracies. And the Soviet Union provides for terrorists the means whereby their dreams may be realized. But the most powerful danger posed to the West, whose liberalism is founded on the depoliticization of vio-

lence and the preclusion of ideologies of final design, comes from the common goal possessed by the Soviets and their terrorist confrères, a goal which will persist no matter how useful they are to each other. Ideology is predicated on an insistence on final answers and a preclusion of discussion; as such, it is almost the logical contradictory of politics itself, which is animated by discussion and ques-

tioning and which can only thrive in nonideological systems—those committed to freedom and democracy. Soviets and terrorists also share a common means: The willingness to politicize violence. This is the very story told by Bismarck a century ago: "We live in a wondrous time in which the strong is weak because of his moral scruples and the weak grows strong because of his audacity." □

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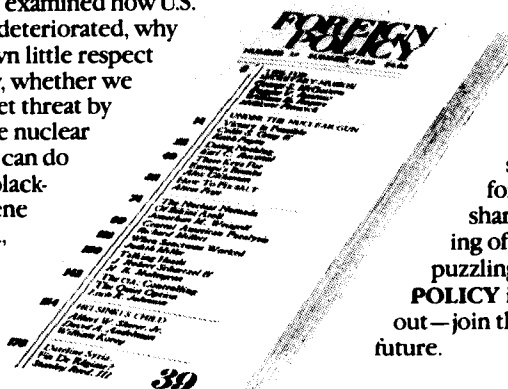
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Off the Record, Robert H. Ferrell's edition of the private papers of Harry S. Truman, is nothing of the sort. The memos, diary entries, appointment sheets, and letters here assembled are all from the Harry S. Truman Library, a documentary Mount Rushmore which the late president busied himself for nearly twenty years carving his face in. What Professor Ferrell has xeroxed is the official

John Muggeridge is an instructor at Niagara College of Applied Arts and Technology in Welland, Ontario.

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Truman legend. We meet in his pages those old campaign-trail favorites, the farmboy President, the Midwest wiseacre, the comradely comrade-in-arms, the fond family man. This is the Harry S. Truman everyone knows; in happier show-business times *Off the Record* would surely have been turned into *Hello, Harry*, a Broadway musical along the lines of *Fiorello* with a big Oval Office scene at the end of act one where the newly sworn-in president, accompanied by Bess, Margie, and a chorus of fedora-hatted party aides, celebrates his rise from Eastern District Judge to Chief Executive in a song called: "Ain't that Sum-pin'!"

In *Off the Record* we meet not only the familiar faces of Harry Truman, but also his familiar evasions. One of these concerns the famous Senate primary of 1934 which Truman won with the help of 50,000 fraudulent votes supplied by the Pendergasts of Kansas City, and which, incidentally, set him on the road to the White House. In a memorandum dated January 1952, to dispell what Professor Ferrell calls "the usual loose talk about Truman's association years before with the Pendergast machine," the president gives the following explanation of that enigmatic contest: "I was elected to the Senate in 1934 over severe opposition in the Primary. . . . By going into sixty of Missouri's 114 counties I won the nomination by a plurality of over 40,000 votes. . . ." And that's it; not even a footnote.

Another such document gap covers Truman's connection with the Alger Hiss affair. Hiss is not mentioned in *Off the Record*. On the record, of course, Truman called the case against the ex-State Department official a "red herring." The only document touching on it in his published papers is a memorandum written in November 1953 concerning Harry Dexter White, a Hiss contemporary who continued to serve in the Truman administration despite the fact that both Whittaker Chambers and Mrs. Bentley had named him to the FBI as a Communist

agent. Why this should have been so neither the president nor his editor seems to have thought it worthwhile going into. Truman, as he often does, falls back on name-calling, labelling Chambers a louse and Mrs. Bentley a crook, and reminding his readers that White himself had testified before a congressional committee both as to his own loyalty and as to the untruthfulness of Chambers and Bentley. There, as far as Truman was concerned, the matter ended. When, for example, the House Un-American Activities Committee, as part of an inquiry into White's activities, "audaciously" (to use Professor Ferrell's revealing adverb) subpoenaed the ex-president, he refused to appear. The truth stops here.

The uncritical nature of Professor Ferrell's editing is not, however, surprising. The Truman everyone knows happens also to be the Truman everyone believes in. He is the one president in recent times to have escaped the myth-wreckers. Camelot has its Mattress Jack; the Silent Majority, its Dirty Dick; and the Great post-Watergate Awakening, its Plains-speaking Jimmy. But for some reason the Truman Years still do not have their Wheeler-Fair-Dealer Harry. The closets containing his particular skeletons just don't seem to get broken into.

Perhaps it is simply a case of folksiness conquering all. The unstuffed-shirt-in-high-places image induces us to make the willing suspension of disbelief in its owner's duplicity. We cannot persuade ourselves that a president who calls his wife "the boss," never quite gets used to being served by butlers, and worries about making a public show of going to church could have led a double life. The very sprightliness of his style seems to rule out subterfuge. No man with a burdened conscience, we feel, would go around calling Senator Kefauver "cowfever" or describing how he ended a solitary dinner at the White House by "taking a hand bath in the finger bowl."

But the most disarming thing about Truman is the panache with which he parades his prejudices. He has no hesitation, for example, in calling Jesus Christ a Protestant, or in giving a list of human benefactors consisting of: Buddha, Jesus, Cincinnatus, George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, and Woodrow Wilson. "I've no ax to grind," he wrote in 1959, "only the welfare of the United States and the Democratic Party. They are synonymous." The antonym of both (as well, no doubt, as of

Buddha, Jesus, and Woodrow Wilson) was the Republican party, to whose newspapers Truman gave what he seems to have considered a scientific appellation, the "sabotage press."

The appeal of an enlightened Archie Bunker, however, still does not fully account for the kid-glove treatment that Truman continues to receive from the image-makers. Nixon, after all, tried on the same persona and was laughed out of the television studios. The Truman legend survives because Truman himself played an essential role in maintaining a bigger and more important legend: that of the Democratic party. Truman's achievement was to make the leftism embraced by postwar Democrats look American. He brought the New Deal down to earth. He gave a small-town luster to big government; he even, through the rhetorical wizardry of the Truman Doctrine, managed to make resigning Eastern Europe to the Soviets seem anti-Communist. He boasted that he had stopped Tito from taking Trieste, at the same time that he was tacitly allowing the Russians everything east of the Elbe. He laid the ghost of Henry Wallace without blunting Democratic progress leftwards. He was Khrushchev to FDR's Stalin.

And, as his private papers make clear, he knew it. The whole election campaign of 1948 was an American version of the Twentieth Party Congress. "I don't believe the USA wants any more fakirs," he wrote in his diary on July 16, 1948, "Teddy and Franklin are enough. So I'm going to make a common sense, intellectually honest campaign. It will be a novelty—and it will win." It did win. What gave him the election was his average-American progressivism. He believed in unions, but stood up to John L. Lewis; "Big money," he wrote, "has too much power and so have big unions—both are riding to a fall because I like neither." He campaigned for civil rights, but dismissed ERA as "a lot of hooey about equal rights." He worshipped at the shrine of science and education but remained firmly attached to traditional values. He had a talent, above all, for making the shifting currents of American foreign policy sound like horse sense. In 1945, still warmed by the afterglow of victory, he called Stalin "honest, but smart as hell" and referred to the deepening confrontation with the Soviet Union as a "mote and beam affair." Seven years later, when Joseph McCarthy's crusade had not yet become a witch-hunt and Bertrand Russell

publicly bet a British television interviewer that the Wisconsin senator would be the next president, Truman, again quoting Scripture, told a visiting Bishop "that Stalin and his crowd had no moral code . . . and that all I wanted to do was to organize Exodus XX, Matthew V, VI & VII to save morals in the world." He was a Kissinger from Missouri.

And now the Democratic party's image again needs refurbishing. Trumanism is dead, destroyed by the fact that its agenda has been imple-

mented, abroad in Vietnam, at home in our schools and public housing projects. Truman himself, however, remains the last Democratic pied piper whose music was not only followed but believed in. Reissuing the Truman legend may well, therefore, turn out to have been a shrewd publishing venture. Listening to popular music from the good old days is always pleasant. With *Kiss Me Jimmy* having been a box office disaster, this may just be the right time to bring on *Hello, Harry*. □

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Daniel N. Robinson / Oxford / \$14.95, \$5.95

Walter Berns

The author of this book belongs to no familiar school and the book itself is not readily categorized. He is a psychologist, even a professor of psychology, but the book could not have been written by someone who is only a psychologist. Its perspective is that of legal philosophy, sometimes called jurisprudence, but, again, not the sort of legal philosophy taught in the law schools or characteristic of the work of our jurists. Daniel Robinson is both old-fashioned and thoroughly modern: old-fashioned insofar as he unabashedly discourses on the relation between law and morality, and modern insofar as he knows modern psychology and its works. This combination of talents proves to be formidable; it enables him to understand and to persuade us of the perils involved in allowing the law to be invaded by what he calls "the psychosocial point of view."

Although Robinson, so far as I can recall, never provides an explicit definition of this term, the reader is left in no doubt as to its meaning or, at least, its characteristics. It is the perspective of social science, which claims to be a science but is not (as Robinson demonstrates in his first chapter), but which is nevertheless accepted as science by the law. The psychosocial perspective is a form of reductionism, the attempt made by psychologists and sociologists to reduce individuals to the characteristics of the groups to which they belong and to explain their words and

deeds as manifestations of these characteristics. In this way, complex moral judgments are reduced to, because they are seen as, mere opinions whose causes are psychological or sociological but never moral. In these respects, the psychosocial perspective differs fundamentally from the human perspective. As Robinson also makes clear in his first chapter, the moral response, of which only human beings are capable, is inherent in the concept of justice and in its instrument, the law. As he says, the law is just "when it obliges us to do what we would genuinely desire to do were we to perform the rational analysis that stands behind every genuinely moral wish." But social science denies the existence of rationality in this sense; human beings look for and give reasons, but social science looks for causes and would if it could culminate in neurophysiology or neurology. Such a perspective is a denial of the purpose of law because it is a denial of human freedom.

Robinson traces the effects of the law's adoption of the psychosocial point of view in successive chapters devoted to the criminal law, the right of a testator to dispose of his property as he sees fit, commitments to mental institutions, educational testing, and, in a chapter entitled "Persons: Their Nature and Their Rights," to abortion, the Karen Quinlan problem, and psychosurgery.

The influence of this psychosocial perspective has been greatest in the criminal law, and especially at the

Walter Berns is Resident Scholar at the American Enterprise Institute.

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point where the law, of necessity, draws the line between responsibility and irresponsibility. Not every person is, at all times, in full possession of those qualities that define a human being and make reasonable the attempt to guide human actions by and in law. Some people are *non compos mentis*, as the Roman law put it, not of sound mind, and to that extent they cannot be held responsible for the acts they commit. In the course of its history, the dimensions of what came to be called the insanity defense have been enlarged and, thanks in our time to the law's reliance on psychology, have also become considerably less distinct.

One reason for this is the psychologist's inability in fact to distinguish between sanity and insanity. He looks for causes but offers characteristics: When called upon to testify in a criminal trial, he is inclined to offer the criminal activity itself as evidence of the disease. As Robinson puts it, instead of being able to show that the criminal act is a consequence of insanity, he would have insanity established by virtue of the act, or by virtue of what is said to be the "fact" that the act could only have been committed by someone who is insane. In this way, the defense tends to be a repetition of the charges leveled in the indictment. Thus, whereas the difference between guilt and innocence continues to depend, as morally it must depend, on the difference between sane and insane, the latter difference has become, thanks to the psychologists, one of unsubstantiated opinion.

Moreover, as Robinson shows but I lack the space to explain, the psychosocial perspective in the law has had the consequence of shifting the burden of proof from the defendant to the prosecution. Where once it was necessary for the defense to prove the fact of insanity, in some jurisdictions the prosecution is now required, once an insanity defense has been offered, to prove the defendant to have been sane when he committed the crime. As one federal court put it recently, to meet its burden the government "must point to affirmative evidence which is adequate to prove sanity without the benefit of a sanity presumption."

But in this strange world, how does one prove sanity? The government may be able to prove that the defen-

dant stabbed his victim, raped her, stole goods from her house, attempted to sell those goods, borrowed a clean shirt, his own being soiled by the stains of his crime, and, in all respects, acted in the manner of someone who knows that what he did is wrong and is trying his best to conceal the fact that he had done what he did. In short, the government may be able to prove that he acted rationally and, therefore, one would think, responsibly. But, even so, it will not be able to win a conviction so long as a court is willing to accept the word of a psychologist that the defendant suffered from "chronic undifferentiated schizophrenia [that was] probably in existence [at the time of the crime]." In this fashion, the moral purpose of law is defeated by psychiatric musings. As Robinson says, "justice cannot survive this sort of thing." The conclusion he draws in his penultimate chapter concerning the effect of the psychosocial perspective on our understanding of the human person can serve equally well as a conclusion to the book as a whole: All the questions discussed "are moral ques-

tions first, legal ones by practical derivation, and not psychosocial ones at all." To treat them as psychosocial questions is to mistreat them.

My only quarrel is with Robinson's suggestion—or with the impression he manages to leave—that the social sciences are solely responsible for the "untoward" conditions he describes. I do not think it was the psychosocial perspective that caused the abortion decisions; and I am as certain as I can be that it was not the psychosocial disposition that caused the courts to reject the evidence of educational testing. Indeed, he acknowledges this when, with reference to this rejection, he says "we must [now] wonder whether the social sciences can survive this sort of 'justice.'" What was at work here, as well as elsewhere, was the spirit of equality, the seeds of which were planted and had begun to sprout long before there was anything that can fairly be called a social science.

But it is almost churlish to mention so trivial a point. This is a splendid book. □

elder statesman. Even his denunciation of the Carter administration's foolish and craven treatment of the Shah begins on an incongruously Olympian note of injured innocence. Kissinger's sense of responsibility—which I do not wish to impugn—induces him to introduce his arguments with many a ponderous "on the one hand, on the other hand." At times this leads to such analyses as the following:

Nobody should deny the Soviet Union its legitimate security concerns.

but:

We cannot accept a definition of security for the Soviet Union that makes everybody else absolutely insecure.

There is a contradiction here, for the nature of the Soviet regime is such that to survive it must expand or threaten to do so: The loss of Poland (or at this point, Afghanistan) would fatally endanger the Soviet state, as indeed in the long run does the very existence of a free, prosperous, and self-confident West. In practice the West must allow such evils as the subjugation of Eastern Europe to continue—but why give them the sanction of legitimacy?

For the most part these speeches and articles deal with current policy problems: They contain little historical or philosophical reflection, and certainly none that we have not read of elsewhere (for example, Kissinger's admiration for Bismarck). In fact, a number of historical references are embarrassingly faulty—Kissinger incorrectly asserts that the United States "accounted for very little in world economics during the nineteenth century," and claims that eighteenth-century European rulers could not conscript their subjects. There is not even much of an effort to defend the Kissinger record against attack from either Right (e.g., on the overselling of détente) or Left (e.g., Vietnam). The speeches about statesmen—Golda Meir, Anwar Sadat, Nelson Rockefeller—lack the penetration and charm of the character sketches in *White House Years*. In general, where the memoirs are often impassioned or humorous these speeches are stolid and stupefyingly serious.

To repeat, there are no new themes in this book: As in *White House Years* Kissinger condemns America's historical oscillation "between brooding isolation and crusading intervention" and again, as in the memoirs, he promulgates a doctrine of geopolitics or balance of power, which

FOR THE RECORD:
SELECTED STATEMENTS, 1977-1980
Henry Kissinger / Little, Brown & Co. / \$12.95

by Eliot Cohen

It is unfair, perhaps, to expect this volume of Henry Kissinger's speeches and articles to match his brilliant memoirs, but even so, we must admit that *For the Record* is a haphazard and tedious collection. The author juxtaposes eulogies to Golda Meir and Nelson Rockefeller with pronouncements on SALT, the future of international business, and the Iranian revolution. Chronological order, not coherence, is the organizing principle, a fact that reflects ill on a man who rightly prides himself on his

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conceptual understanding of policy problems. Many of the articles are repetitious, which is perhaps not surprising: Anyone who lectures or orates as much as Kissinger must of necessity use stock paragraphs to make the same point to successive audiences. Collections like these of miscellaneous utterances and articles can still repay a skimming, at least, if there are nuggets of insight to be found by an alert reader—think of a volume in *The Collected Essays, Journalism, and Letters of George Orwell*, for example. Unfortunately, however, *For the Record* is no such book. Kissinger's views often make a good deal of sense, as when he urges Western rearmament and a policy of containment *vis-à-vis* the Soviet Union, but the heavy sobriety which pervades the book means that there is little to disagree with, and equally little to stimulate thought.

Kissinger self-consciously wears and refuses to doff the mantle of the

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"has always been unfashionable in America." These indictments, though they have some merit, gain nothing from mere reassertion. The burden of fact remains that since the time of our emergence as a great power in 1945, our foreign policy has been fundamentally consistent. American policy changes far more in speech than action: To take one recent example, it was the Carter administration which created the Rapid Deployment Force and began obtaining bases for it near the Persian Gulf. This is not to defend the past administration or downplay the disasters it facilitated, but merely to note a continuity of policy that Kissinger's easy denunciation—typical of many academic critics of American foreign policy—ignores. On the second point, Kissinger fails to elaborate his conception of geopolitics, or reconcile it with the differences between the relatively homogeneous European world system of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and the fractured world of today. Bismarck did not have to tame one totalitarian power, let alone several. Kissinger's criticisms of American foreign policy may contain some portion of the truth, but they require argument, not mere pronouncement.

There is no small irony in the story of Henry Kissinger's rise. His accession to the unofficial vice-presidency for foreign policy owed much to his indubitable academic brilliance, but owed even more, I think, to skills and attributes not often associated with professors. His memoirs unconsciously reveal his feline sensitivity to the weaknesses and desires of those he worked with—from Ehrlichman's "public relations experts" to journalists bewitched by the prospect of being in the confidence of a genius. His personal charm served his needs but did not attenuate his ruthlessness or diminish his guile: Men as different as William Rogers and Daniel Patrick Moynihan fell victim to his bureaucratic ambushes.

Kissinger's eight years in Washington have not slaked his thirst for power, and he admits as much. This collection contributes to the image of a tried and steady statesman that Kissinger obviously wishes to cultivate. The speeches appear at first glance not only prudent and wide-ranging, but reassuringly complicated and dull, for this is a book meant to be purchased, not read. One should therefore pass by this work of Kissinger the politician, and await a second volume from Kissinger the memoirist. □

STARK

(continued from page 14)

that he who kills one man destroys the world. Cain is as evil as Hitler; there are no tradeoffs.

Such a fearless symmetry inevitably leads us to wonder about the roots of this incredibly pervasive ideological conflict, a conflict which, though manifested in many different forms, is probably, as Isaiah Berlin

suggested in his own particular manifestation, the greatest intellectual division in human history. We may thus suspect that the roots of the division also lie far beneath its particular manifestation as a desire for simplicity and predictability versus a love of complexity and unpredictability. I would suspect that if one wends his way through the labyrinthine plumbing of the mind which

underlies each of the two ideologies, he will discover that the cleavage is as follows: For Teller, and for most minds who prefer to see the world simply and certainly, the inchoate bedrock of their ideology is man, a finite being, attempting to grasp the infinity of reality (and the only way that can happen is if the finite being manages to codify, that is, simplify, infinity). For Borges and

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his intellectual confrères, by contrast, the molten foundation of their ideology is man, an infinite self, attempting to deal with a finitely knowable reality.

As I have suggested, this dichotomy pervades most intellectual disciplines; but perhaps it will be illuminating to recast it briefly in terms of finite-self-faces-infinite world versus infinite-self-faces-finite world as ap-

plied to, say, history. A Tellerian approach to history would simply be history as science, history as the simple attempt to grasp more and more knowledge of the past. A Borgesian approach, the other great mindset, would take the point of view advanced in Nietzsche's *Use and Abuse of History*, in which history is not to be a scientific diagramming of memory but a pregnant suggestion

and potent prod for artistic creation, or of Collingwood, for whom history is ultimately defensible as a history of the mind, not of "reality," and therefore is already art, and requires artistic talent for its elucidation. For Nietzsche, the finite world would spark an infinitude of intellectual artifacts; for Collingwood, the finite world sparks an infinitude of intellectual representations of itself.

Either way, this is history for a Borges, a fox, not a Teller.

So there is a war on all fronts between the forces of complexity and the forces of simplicity, the unlimited mind combining the limited constituents of human knowledge in myriad forms versus the limited mind reducing endless knowledge into simple, digestible form. Jorge Luis Borges is in a unique position to answer Teller, not just because his own system of metaphor points out the follies of the hedgehog school, but because he also possesses an answer to the inevitable comeback of the simplicity theorist that even if the complexity-unpredictability school is correct, it is dangerous (that is, the nutrients of complexity are poisonous, whereas the nutrients of simplicity are not). First, let's see how Borges would show Teller to be wrong, before we go on to consider how Borges is also beneficial to our health.

Borges is well known for his musings that one day the number of possible musical combinations will be exhausted; that one day there could exist a "universal library which would register all the variations of the twenty-odd orthographical symbols, in other words, all that is given to express in all languages," and so on. The possibilities for human knowledge are finite for Borges, or, when there is a passageway to the infinite, it is to an infinity of ignorance. For example, in "Avatars of the Tortoise," Achilles and the tortoise study this lucid reasoning:

- a) Two things equal to a third are equal to one another.
- b) Two sides of a triangle are equal to MN.
- c) The two sides of this triangle are equal to one another.

The tortoise accepts *a* and *b*, "but denies that they justify the conclusion. He has Achilles interpolate a hypothetical proposition":

- a) Two things equal to a third are equal to one another.
- b) Two sides of a triangle are equal to MN.
- c) If *a* and *b* are valid, *z* is valid.
- z) The two sides of the triangle are equal to one another.

Needless to say, the tortoise then insists that Achilles add:

- d) If *a*, *b*, and *c* are valid, *z* is valid.

and so on. Conclusion: The possibilities for ignorance are infinite; certainly not so the possibilities for knowledge. Thankfully, however, not all human endeavor is terminable when finite knowledge meets infinite

Working Smarter

A new buzz-word is coming into vogue among people concerned about America's economic decline. The word is *reindustrialization* — as in "the reindustrialization of America." It bespeaks the need to revitalize the economy and reverse America's slide into an economic second-rater.

The marks of malaise are all around — unemployment lines, declining living standards, entire industries in trouble, whopping foreign trade deficits. Small wonder there's so much attention being focused on ways to reindustrialize America and get our economy back on a growth track. "Even the trendy set in economic policy has sensed that something is wrong in the American economy," says one economist.

One of the main things wrong is the stunting of productivity. Productivity, or output per employee, is a key measure of economic health. When productivity grows, so does the economy in real terms, raising people's living standards. When it declines, real economic growth slows and stagnates. Increased productivity also yields resources to meet public needs, such as reducing poverty and improving environmental quality.

America traditionally has led the world in overall productivity. It still does. But other countries are catching up. If current trends continue, Japan and West Germany can be expected to surpass us during this decade. Among the non-communist industrialized nations, the U.S. lags at the bottom in productivity growth. The grim results are higher prices, unemployment, lower real pay, and a blunting of U.S. competitiveness in world markets.

American productivity grew at about 3% a year during the 1950s and 1960s, then slumped to less than half that rate

during the '70s. It actually declined in 1979 and again in 1980. Had we maintained the 3% rate during the last decade, real U.S. output would now be about \$400 billion higher. Personal income would be up about \$4,000 per household.

Raising productivity doesn't mean working harder. It means working *smarter*. And this demands large doses of the twin I's — investment and innovation.

More money has to be channeled into capital investment for the modern plants and machines that enable people to work more efficiently and productively. Research and development must be stepped up in the quest for new technologies and innovative ways of doing things.

Whatever has happened to Yankee ingenuity, anyway? The number of U.S. patents issued to Americans has fallen 25% since 1971 while the number issued to foreigners has risen 14%. About 40% of the patents now issued by the U.S. go to people from other countries. America's most formidable foreign competitors, Japan and West Germany, outperform us both in capital investment and research and development measured as a percentage of total national output.

The reindustrialization of America must start with recognition that invigorating our productivity is a top imperative.

Policies and programs are needed to expand saving and investment, stimulate technological advances, enhance the climate for risk-taking and innovation, encourage adequate corporate profits, and ease the tax and regulatory burdens that undercut business' ability to create, compete, and produce.

Nothing less than a rebuilding of the nation's productive might is required if America is to regain its economic health.



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self. Literature, for example, would be infinite even if Lasswitz's universal library were established, because there are as many ways to read a text as there are selves, and each person is an infinitude of selves.

How, then, would Borges skewer the simplifying, consistent, cumulative knowledge mindset? Simply by examining Borges' style (incredibly unambiguous for something so sophisticated), we may see what happens when finite man sets out in search of infinite knowledge, which of course is exactly what occurs on the road to science. Consider the following typical Borgesian observation from *A New Refutation of Time*:

Let us consider a life in whose course there is an abundance of repetitions: mine, for example. I never pass in front of the Recoleta without remembering that my father, my grandparents and my great-grandparents are buried there, just as I shall be someday; then I remember that I have remembered the same thing an untold number of times already. . . .

The conclusion: When, as finite selves, we hurtle into the future, ostensibly accumulating knowledge à la Teller, we actually shall be accumulating memories, and memories of those memories, and memories of those memories of those memories, so that, the more we know, the less we can know. (Unhappily, since each memory brings with it the potential to be itself a memory, our minds, if they are finite as according to Teller, will cease to absorb new knowledge at a geometric rate.) Not only that, but we shall forget more and more as time passes, so that we shall be remembering, and remembering remembering, fewer and fewer things until our minds resemble a hall of mirrors, an infinity of reflections on one thing. The upshot: The pursuit of simplicity leads ultimately to knowledge of one little thing.

All of this verbal lucubration may cause one to wonder what was so bad about metaphorical onanism. But it is necessary to ease the stranglehold that Teller's conception of scientific endeavor has on modern consciousness. It may appear for a moment that the debate has been recast into C.P. Snow's original terms; that Borges represents the literary imagination viewing a finite world from an infinite mind, and Teller the scientific purview of an infinite world from a finite mind, and certainly, Teller's outlook is less pervasive in literature than it is in science. Nevertheless, Teller could acknowledge the truth in what I have called "Borges' view" (or he could simply poke fun at it), and still, by retreating to higher

ground, make a case for the simplicity-certainty-cumulative knowledge-discovery weltanschauung, because while it may not be accurate, it is salutary—in politics, history, and morality.

It is useful for the reasons given in Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, Yeats' "Second Coming"; in fact, in much of early modern British literature. Simply put (how appropriate!), it is

that the bewildering complexity of the world, the absence of certainty in knowledge, the pervasive flux of existence are dangerous for finite minds, for such complexity, uncertainty, and flux leads them to believe that the only philosophical question is the question of suicide, that there is no reason for a man not to kill his brother; they lead to false hopes and contagious fear. To his credit, Teller

does not maunder over such dangers, but his purpose in writing *The Pursuit of Simplicity* was to calm us on these matters. And it is in politics, history, moral philosophy, and economics, not science, that these dangers are held to be greatest. Knowledge of our own ignorance is poisonous; we must persist in our attempts to think the unthinkable, or at least we must believe we can. →



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But it is on these grounds that Borges makes the most effective case for the complexity-uncertainty-ignorance-exploration outlook. His worldview embodies the disbelief in truth and continuity that one might expect of a true fox, with none of the sad moral, political, and historical consequences which are alleged to accompany such disbelief. No moral relativist he, for Cain is as evil as Hitler. No historical dilettante he, for "neither vengeance nor pardon nor prisons nor even oblivion can modify the invulnerable past." No counselor of political instability he, for hope and fear are by their very natures in vain, so there is no need to sweep them under the carpet of consciousness by pretending that the world is other than it is.

Borges is singularly able to repel these traditional assaults on the complexity-unpredictability mentality where his ideological confrères succumb to charges that a "many little things" outlook leads to nihilism, improvidence, and relativism. By regarding each moment as autonomous, as unconnected to the one before it and the one after it, in delighting in the infinitude of the mind while lucidly recognizing the finitude of human accessibility to reality, Borges is led to oppose with sustained vigor anything which ruptures the irretrievable. For him, a regime is not evaluated historically by the sort of citizen it produces, nor even by the aggregate number of people it kills, a regime is judged at every moment on every count. What is thought by the simplifier to be a relatively shaky basis for trenchant morality—that all events are disconnected and unrelated—is shown by Borges to be capable of sustaining an immovable and even a harsh moral system.

What of the charge that if we don't persist in thinking about the unthinkable (which essentially means simplifying for our finite minds that which

cannot be simplified), our ignorance will fill us with irrational proclivities toward the future? The answer is that there is nothing in the ultimate finitude of human knowledge which of necessity elicits a dangerous and debilitating fear of the unknown. Awareness of the fact that some things will always be mysteries need not be unhealthy, and not simply because such awareness will convert us from contemplating the finitude of human knowledge to employing the infinitude of the human mind. The very question which terrified Heidegger—"Why is there something rather than nothing?"—is, looked at on the flip side, the sum and substance of the teleological argument for the existence of God. The *regressus in infinitum* of the tortoise—the fact that every proof requires a previous proof, which leads to Achilles' intense frustration—is the sum and substance of Thomas Aquinas's cosmological argument for the existence of God. And if anything dampens fear of the unknown, it is belief in God, a belief which Shaftesbury's skeptic Philocles maintains cannot be the outcome of the simplicity school since the limited mind has no way of demonstrating that the design which "lies within our view or knowledge" is not but "a mere point still, a very nothing compared to what remains."

In a more political vein, albeit a vein which still leads to the same major artery, namely, the perniciousness of an awareness of ignorance, Daniel Bell wrote not long ago that "the failure of liberalism is the failure of knowledge." Edward Teller would agree. Yet the very pith of Bell's depressing message was given a cast of exuberance, hope, and fearlessness by Learned Hand several decades before: "The spirit of liberalism is the spirit which is not too sure that it is right." A recognition of the factitious and fractured nature of human knowledge can be

downright exhilarating. Neither hope nor fear are logical correlates of ignorance, just as amorality is not a necessary consequence of the abandonment of cumulation in knowledge.

• • •

Since "the pursuit of simplicity" and the concomitant retreat from complexity are played out over the course of social as well as natural knowledge, it might be illuminating to attenuate into the social order one pregnant metaphor from the physical realm: relativity. The initial problem of relativity is posed succinctly by Teller: Suppose a cigarette lighter is pushed in just as the car which contains it passes a hitchhiker, and then pops out fifteen seconds later (the car is travelling at sixty miles per hour). To the driver of the car, the two events are not separated in space. To the hitchhiker, on the other hand, the two events are one quarter of a mile apart. Einstein's singular contribution was to show that not only does the space between events differ for observers, the time does as well—it is infinitesimally longer for the hitchhiker. Now the question is—if the two observers were to report their finding, who would be correct? Teller offers the following:

The problem of two observed distances between two events might be solved by adopting a democratic perspective. Most people are at rest while cars move in all possible directions. Leave the decision to the majority who are at rest.

Here Teller applies a political metaphor to science. This, of course, is not in the grand tradition of true hedgehogs who would see a political pattern in science. The pattern can be drawn out if we replace space with socioeconomic differentials, and time with history, and change the event from the pushing in and popping out of a cigarette lighter to the rise in status of a socioeconomic group. Now to a member of that group (who corresponds to the driver), the change in status appears much less striking than it does to the seething member of another group. The extent of this difference in purview is the measure of the envy the latter group feels for the former, and of the social wear-and-tear which results. We can thus understand the limits and prerequisites of a "democratic perspective": Only when most of us are at rest will each of us be linked to the stabilizing constancy of a social and historical truth; the perspective of each will be the perspective of most. And it is precisely a lack of constancy and the consequent discordance of everyone pulling in different directions morally,

politically, economically, and socially, which is held by theorists of the one big thing to be the democratic downfall. Where are constancy, truth, or at least common standards, when none of us are at rest, and when each of us views very differently his own condition and that of others?

Fortunately, Einstein did discern an invariant in the midst of the apparently whirling relativity of the physical world, an invariant which, if the metaphor of relativity is successfully squeezed through the strainer of credulity into the social mold, may indicate the way in which stability and consensus can emerge from social flux. Einstein's invariant is a certain relationship between the speed of light (c) times the time elapsed between the two events (t), and the distance between the two events (r). Although this is not Einstein's formulation, we may say that $(c \times t)/r$ is a constant for all observers. And since c , the speed of light, is itself constant, the larger r is (it is larger for the hitchhiker), the larger t must be for any observer. It's as if one needs more time to absorb events of greater size.

Now, what is the social correspondent of this invariant? Let us replace the speed of light with the speed of information about events, and, as before, time with history and space with distances within the socioeconomic hierarchy. Let us also recall that the newly arriviste conventional wisdom is that, if social groups perceive social events from the perspective of their own situations (much as the driver and the hitchhiker perceive their event from relative perspectives), we shall be bereft of common invariant standards unless a way is found to compensate for these differences in social vision. Totalitarian nations avoid this problem by enforcing a *uniform* view of social change, and then eradicating the other two variables which are available to democracies to correct for their *multi-form* views of social change—history and information—which, if given variable play in totalitarian societies would destroy them, sooner or later. (It seems worth remarking that both history and information are most vulnerable to eclipse in Communist societies, the former largely because of the poverty of Marxist historiography, the latter if for no other reason than the absence in Communism of one of the most effective devices of communication, the market. Of course, in explaining either phenomenon we should not overlook the simple need to lie!)

However, it is the burden of democracy to identify some means of distilling constancy from the bubbling

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inconstancy which results from differing views of the magnitude of social change (r) and of the speed of history (t), and different accessibilities to ready information (c), which unlike the speed of light is not a constant. What advice would Einstein proffer if, as do Teller, Borges, and all others who have a metaphorically fertile and multi-potent worldview, he were to accept the applicability of the stuff of science to the stuff of politics? Let us take the case of the perceived success of our socially ascendant group, say, the shareholders of Exxon, which is greater in the eyes of a farmer than in the eyes of the shareholder himself, because the shareholder is moving while the farmer remains static. A constancy can be divined in two ways—either c (the speed with which information about Exxon's profits is conveyed) is larger for the farmer than for the shareholder, or t (the sense of history) is larger for the farmer. The first—if the speed of information about Exxon's profits is faster for the farmer than for the shareholder—means, essentially, the modern commonplace of the farmer correctly anticipating Exxon's profits and demanding correspondingly higher food prices before the fact, which leads to a constancy borne of a rough equality of socioeconomic velocity. It is this constancy which explains why most Western democracies, though enwrapped in a dervish of catch-up, are not falling apart.

But there is a second haven for constancy in a society of relativity; it exists if the historical period during which Exxon's profits increased is greater for the farmer than for the shareholder. This constancy is not an equality of socioeconomic acceleration, it is a quid pro quo: The higher socioeconomic velocity of the Exxon shareholder is offset by the higher historical velocity of the farmer. What is meant by "historical velocity," a term used variously by Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. and David Donald, among others? It means that if more things happen to the farmer, if present occurrences, rather than future anticipations, take up his time, if he sees life whole in contradistinction to the shareholder who sees it steadily, he has less occasion to resent Exxon's higher profits.

Relativity thus suggests the appropriate compromise for hedgehogs and foxes, and this is only fitting when one remembers that relativity is a theory of both change and constancy, relativism and the absolute, certainty and uncertainty, predictability and absurd surprise. The message of relativity is not that there is one big thing and many little things.

It is that there is one little thing and many big things. The one little thing is the simplicity which comes from the finite mind addressing the infinite reality. It must be a little thing, because if it is a big thing, it will ultimately be more destabilizing than the fox's view of the world, for simplicity as a big thing is a promise which cannot possibly be met, and as an invariant it depends precariously

on the relations between many complex and changing big things. Relevance and usefulness in history, information in economics, tradition in politics, dogmatic belief in religion, and systems in morality each play their part, but their parts are more or less ultimately limited. The many big things form the complexity which accrues from an infinite mind addressing a finite reality; as an invari-

ant it depends on the relations between men's minds and their world. The result is interpretation in history, dynamic uncertainty in economics, innovation in politics, wonderment in religion, and value in morality. The pursuit of complexity seems a much bigger thing than the pursuit of simplicity, if only because the latter pursuit must end well before its goal is attained. □

Defend the Family Sensibly

Finally, the health of the family has become a top priority item on the national agenda of concern. It's about time, for the family is the premier humanizing institution of our society. The family is where love is grounded and actualized in commitment, where we learn to give as well as receive, where the harsh judgments of the marketplace can be neutralized by love and forgiveness. It is the embryo of a better, less impersonal, less calculating society. It is our children and our future.

But there are lethal forces at loose eating away at the health of the American family: women's lib extremism and the battering of wives and children, abortion and unemployment, "gay" politics and careerism, pornography and greed, and even the television-as-babysitter.

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ism, or the punitive mind-set, but in an affirmation of the dignity of every human life — and that to be truly pro-life entails looking at all other issues from a life-affirming point of view.

We believe the time has come to build a national pro-family consensus. If the Christian New Rightists are allowed to exploit the family issue and use it to divide conservatives from liberals, Republicans from Democrats, they may have some momentary success in winning power for themselves, but they will poison the well-springs of social renewal. And ultimately, the pro-family cause will be the victim, for its momentum will be stymied as it isolates itself in the ghettos of resentment and rancor.

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The Daily Pennsylvanian

Impressive editorial commentary from Mr. Don Manno, a seasoned mainstream humanitarian journalist for the student newspaper at the University of Pennsylvania, whose remarkable president purred from his padded cell about academic freedom. Judging from people's reactions to the news of the president's shooting Monday, you would have thought that it was an attempt at regicide instead of presidential homicide.

People were shocked, distressed, infuriated, saddened, horrified. Montana Gov. Ted Schwinden was "appalled and angry. It's just gotten to be a game," he told The Associated Press. "Whether it's John Lennon or the president, if you've got your name up on a marquee, someone tries to shoot out the lights."

Nice quote.

But let's put things in perspective. Reagan wasn't killed; he wasn't even hurt badly. He's running the country, as he has been for the past 71 days, as he probably will be for the next 1,390. Since you've started reading this column, more people have been killed by criminals throughout the nation than were shot outside the Washington Hilton Monday.

When the news first broke on the AP wire here at the DP with the report that Reagan had not been wounded, my first reaction was "Too bad he (the would-be assassin) missed. That's the result of sending an amateur to do a professional job."

Then, with the news that he had been shot, my reaction had changed to "I hope he dies."

No I don't like Ronald Reagan.

If the American political system has shifted its emphasis to the point that elections now carry the probability of real ideological change along with change in government, then the system now risks the possibility that the bullet will increasingly be seen as a legitimate means of political expression.

We may have seen the first example of that change Monday.

John Hinckley, arrested in the shooting, appears to be frustrated and angry. He's no outcast like Oswald, nor a nut like Sara Jane Moore or Squeaky Fromme (he's undergone psychotherapy, but then, so have a lot of people). In fact, as the *Inquirer* wrote, Hinckley is a product of the aristocracy. He just seems to be someone who could get upset and angry enough about the political system to use a bullet to cancel out the ballot.

A lot of people feel that way about the system.

Including me.

[April 1, 1981]

Miscellaneous

Notification of a gorgeous advance in American *kultur* in the Department of the Tone Art:

After 2½ years of delighting audiences and winning critical acclaim throughout

the San Francisco Bay Area, the San Francisco Gay Men's Chorus this June will carry their musical celebration of gay pride to 9 American cities, from coast to coast.

The 135-man chorus, its members ranging in age from 22 to 56 and representing a broad spectrum of occupations, ethnic backgrounds and hometowns throughout America, will promote a truly inspiring image of the extraordinary talents and resourcefulness of America's gay community.

The chorus is conducted by Dick Kramer, a highly skilled specialist in choral music. Dick has performed with the Santa Fe Opera, toured with the Roger Wagner Chorale and was a soloist at the Carmel Bach Festival as well as in churches throughout California and New York.

The historic tour undoubtedly will attract the attention of media all along the route. At a time when a new national climate is raising uncertainty in gay communities across America, the San Francisco Gay Men's Chorus is bursting forth with an uncompromising message of unity, strength and pride.

Correction

By popular demand we are reprinting the first paragraph of last month's "Continuing Crisis" in its corrected form:

March 6 to April 1, and as these lines are being written charnel and angry thoughts abound. Very bad news has come from the Washington Hilton where the President, his press secretary, and two security guards have been shot. Even before it was known whether the President would live or die, loutish television journalists were duteously reminding ideologues that the President had opposed gun control. Mr. Fred Graham, CBS's so-called "legal correspondent," displayed near total ignorance when asked by Mr. Dan Rather to relate the 25th Amendment, and then both of these whistle-brains went on to declare erroneously that the Amendment had never been used. The ignoramuses of television news blabbered on for hours, sniping at the sorely pressed White House personnel as though the White House were perpetrating infamy, or as though its first obligation were to television news rather than to the Constitution and to matters of state. Then, apparently bored by the proceedings, the louts fell upon Secretary of State Alexander Haig and created a huge controversy over whether Mr. Haig had just attempted America's first general's putsch, or whether he had merely spoken maladroitly. By the time our April 1 print deadline had arrived the magnificoes of the media had spent more time condemning Mr. Haig than the would-be assassin, John W. Hinckley, Jr., filmgoer.

The Progressive

The esteemed Alex Kotlowitz describes the travail and rage that shrouds the life of a modern-day McDonald's hamburger jerk, lugging Happy Meals and McMuffins by the thousands to the Nation's indurated Elites. Will this madness ever end?

Hot grease from the french fry vats leaves blisters on your arms and hands. You rub on some salve, and go back to the boards.

You punch in for a six-hour shift, but the customers are sparse, so the boss clocks you out and sends you home early. You've made just enough to pay for car fare to and from work.

You ask for a merit raise, hoping the supervisor likes you enough to pay a nickel an hour more. But you're not the boss's favorite, so your pay will stay at minimum wage—\$3.35 an hour.

Life under the Golden Arches is not all that golden, as any of the million young Americans who work at a fast-food restaurant can tell you. (McDonald's alone boasts that by 1985, one-fifth of all American youth will have at one time worked for the company.) Grease burns, irregular hours, autocratic bosses, sexual harassment, and low wages all come with the quarter-pounder.

[April, 1981]

The Village Voice

The estimable, incomparable, and distinguished Carrie Rickey launches thoughts of an aesthetic and ontological nature from a kitty litter box at the *Village Voice*:

Item: The unconventional thriller *Eye-witness* has an Irish-American Vietnam vet (William Hurt), a janitor in the Metropolitan Life Building, who stumbles onto the scene of a crime: a Vietnamese-born businessman has been slashed to death. The businessman's associates, inscrutable Asians to a man, dog Hurt's steps, as do two cops, one Jewish, one black, the latter named Lieutenant Black who jokes, "My name should be easy to remember." If this isn't enough ethnic typing, there's an additional subplot linking the Asians with an Irgun-bloodthirsty "Save Soviet Jewry" group led by one Joseph, the Aryan-looking Christopher Plummer.

In paranoid moments, I attribute this rash of ethnic stereotyping to toxic proto-Reaganism. Slogans like "Let's make America great again, let's restore to America the qualities which it's lost," can only mean: "Let's stop feeling guilty about racism, let's get the white power elite confident again." Reagan's cant often sounds like 1840s Know-Nothingism, a Nativist movement preaching "America for the Americans," that is, "No ethnics, please." Assimilate or vanish. My most paranoid nightmare: all Americans will someday carry identity cards declaring ethnic heritage, so that when the American Reich begins.

[February 25—March 3, 1981]

The New Republic

A brief interlude in an interview with the author Toni Morrison, of whom the interviewer sings,

Her love of language was the subtext and constant lesson of her manner. She performs words. Gertrude Stein said poetry was "caressing nouns." Toni Morrison doesn't like to be called a poetic writer, but it is her almost physical relation to language that allows her to tell the old stories she feels are best.

And now the poet Morrison:

After my first novel, *The Bluest Eye*, writing became a way to be coherent in the world. It became necessary and possible for me to sort out the past, and the selection process, being disciplined and guided, was genuine thinking as opposed to simple response or problem-solving.

[March 21, 1981]

The New York Times Magazine

Seminal event in the intellectual evolution of the prodigious Alan Alda, as noted by Professor Carey Winfred in a leading journal of urban sophistication.

While convalescing from polio, Alda spent most of the next two years in a swimming pool (he was even privately tutored while he paddled around), strengthening his weakened muscles. Alan Alda not only credits his full recovery to the treatment but traces his strong feminist sympathies to it as well.

"I came to realize," he said, "that I probably owe my life—and if not my life, the fact that I'm not crippled—to two women: my mother, who recognized polio's symptoms, and to Elizabeth Kenny, the famous Sister Kenny, an Australian nurse who figured out the treatment. Which to me shows that sexism is not just impolite, it can be lethal."

Alda's pacifism, on the other hand, has its origins in the time his pet rabbits came down with ear infections. Told they would have to be destroyed, Alda decided the best way to dispatch them would be with a rifle. That way, he reasoned, he would experience whatever thrills had eluded him as an unsuccessful hunter. Unfortunately, the script didn't play the way he had written it.

"The rabbits would flop in the air and I would have to shoot them again to put them out of their pain," Alda remembers. "I started it with a feeling of exhilaration and ended it sobbing. I touched something way out of my control. I think I saw what it was like to be a sniper or a killer."

When Alda at last returned to school in junior high, he was an outsider. "I wanted to behave my own way and I was made to know that wasn't acceptable," he told me. "I wasn't supposed to giggle. I wasn't supposed to cry. I had to be interested in sports and I had to take it for granted that to 'score' with a girl was something positive."

[April 20, 1981]

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